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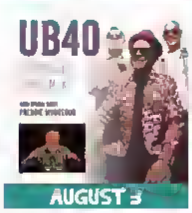
JULY 28

JULY 29

AUGUST 1

AUGUST 2



AUGUST 3

AUGUST 4

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Get Out & Get Lost

Welcome to *OC Weekly*'s third annual Summer Travel Guide! This year, we came up with a road-trip theme and attempted to focus on places within driving distance of Orange County. But then we realized that would rule out Catalina, one of the best local getaways in Southern California. And then our maniac theater critic Joel Beers decided he wanted to fly to someplace literally on fire, so suddenly Hawai'i's Big Island became part of the package. In these pages, you will find a plethora of beautiful photographs and well-curated essays by our diverse team of writers. Each story will expertly guide you out of Orange County in every conceivable direction, from desert hideaways and rural retreats to the wineries and gustatory delights of coastal California, from Phoenix and Tucson to Park City and beyond. Enjoy the read—and then get lost!

—NICK SCHOU

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HEY YOU!
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Quackers

You are the two ducks that have attached themselves to the impromptu ecosystem afforded by the excessive sprinkling across the street, where a new building is supposed to break ground. I spotted y'all drinking from the puddles one morning while walking my dog. The next day, you took over the grassy lot that the new landlord is likely to raze. Long may you quack!

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708 or email us at letters@ocweekly.com

OC WEEKLY

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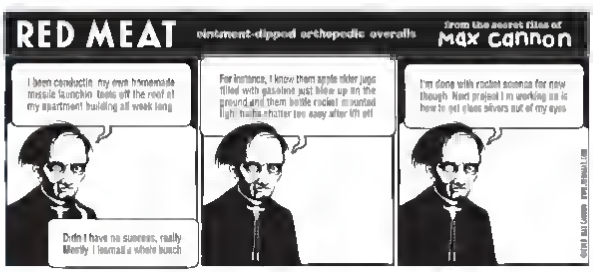
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Max Cannon
I been conductin my own homemade missile launchin tests off the roof of my apartment building all week long.
For instance, I know them apple cider jugs filled with gasoline just blow up on the ground and them bottle rocket ornamental light bulbs shatter too easy after th ot
I'm done with rocket science for now though. Next project I'm working on is how to get glass slivers out of my eyes
Didn't have no success, really. Mostly I learnt a whole bunch

LEGAL NOTICE

Rubenstein v The Neiman Marcus Group LLC Case No 2 14-cv-07155-SJO-JPR

IF YOU MADE A PURCHASE AT A NEIMAN MARCUS LAST CALL STORE IN CALIFORNIA OR ONLINE (IF YOU PROVIDED A CALIFORNIA BILLING ADDRESS), YOU COULD GET BENEFITS FROM A CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT.

A settlement has been proposed in the lawsuit referenced above ("Settlement"), which is pending in the United States District Court for the Central District of California ("Court"). Complete information regarding the settlement is available at www.CALastCallSettlement.com.

Am I Included? Your rights are affected if you made a purchase advertised with a "Compared To" price from August 7, 2010 through May 21, 2018: (1) at any California Last Call store(s) and/or (2) on Last Call's website if you provided a California billing address (the "Settlement"). These purchases are referred to as "Qualifying Purchases."

Summary of the Settlement: The lawsuit alleges that consumers were misled by the "Compared To" price tags used on merchandise at Neiman Marcus Last Call outlet stores in California, to their financial detriment. Neiman Marcus denies that it did anything wrong, and no court has determined that Neiman Marcus did anything wrong. The proposed Settlement would resolve all claims in the class action lawsuit.

What Can I Get? The Settlement, if approved, would provide $2,900,000 to give cash benefits in the form of a check to those customers who made a Qualifying Purchase, as well as to pay Plaintiff's attorneys' fees and expenses, a service award for the Settlement Class Representative, and the administrative costs of the Settlement.

How Do I Get My Settlement Benefits? You must submit a claim by **August 20, 2018** to receive settlement benefits. Go to www.CALastCallSettlement.com, submit a claim online now. The website also provides instructions for how to submit a claim in hard copy through the mail.

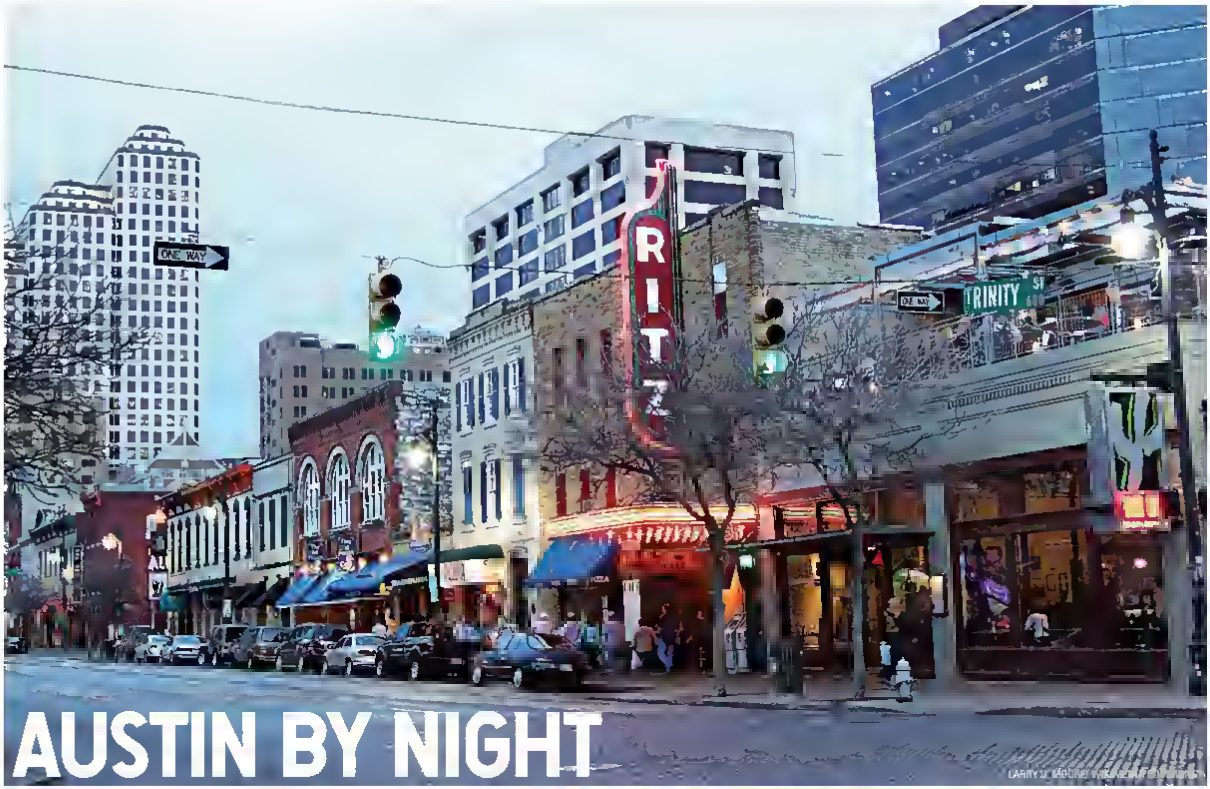
What Are My Other Options? Go to www.CALastCallSettlement.com to get more information and learn about what your legal rights are. Basically, if you do not submit a claim, you have three options:

1. **Object** – Write to the Court about why you believe the Settlement is unfair. To object, you must follow the procedures set forth in the Settlement Class Notice available on the settlement website no later than August 20, 2018, which include attesting under penalty of perjury that you are a Settlement Class Member. The Court will hold a hearing on October 1, 2018 to consider objections. See the Settlement Class Notice on the settlement website if you wish to speak at the hearing in addition to submitting a written objection.
2. **Exclude Yourself** – Ask not to be included in the Settlement, also known as "opting out." You must exclude yourself by August 20, 2018. You will get no payment from the Settlement, but you may be able to pursue or continue your own lawsuit about the legal claims in this case. See the Settlement Class Notice on the settlement website for the requirements for excluding yourself from the Settlement.
3. **Do Nothing** – Give up your rights to sue Neiman Marcus on your own for the legal claims in this case and get no Settlement money.

Do I Have A Lawyer? Yes. The Court has appointed Kirtland & Packard LLP to represent you and other Class Members. These lawyers are called Class Counsel. You will not be individually charged for these lawyers' services. If you want to be represented by your own lawyer, you may hire one at your own expense.

Scheduled Hearing: The Court will conduct a hearing on whether to finally approve the Settlement and, if so, will determine what fees and expenses should be awarded to Class Counsel and whether a service award should be awarded to the Class Representatives. The hearing is presently scheduled for October 1, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. in Court Room 10C, located at 350 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Honorable S. James Otero presiding, but may be changed. It is not necessary for you to appear at this hearing, but you may attend at your own expense.

This is only a summary. For detailed information, visit **www.CALastCallSettlement.com.**



AUSTIN BY NIGHT

FROM BARS AND CLUBS TO BARBECUE GRUB

BY NATE JACKSON

A lot of people try to equate Austin with living in L.A. And although it's true that the influx of West Coasters flooding the Silicon Valley of the Southwest is vexing to the locals, it's not enough to rob one of the greatest cities in the world of its unique flavor—at least not yet anyway. Whether you're flying in for a weekend or trucking halfway across the country down Interstate 10, getting to Austin carries a totally different level of electricity, eclecticism and charcoal-smoked charm.

Whereas LA might have its food and music scenes nailed down, rarely do they exist at such a high level at the same time, especially around the time most out-of-towners visit Austin for South By Southwest. Though this tiny article is a laughably small space to talk about this illustrious state capital, it's worth mentioning some key spots that anyone spending a couple of days here would enjoy. Starting with downtown, the hub where cultures collide, you can find a different vibe down every street. The Fifth Street scene, with its fine dining and packed watering holes such as **Handlebar** (*121 E. Fifth St., Austin, 512-344-9571, handlebaraustin.com*) and **Antone's** (*305 E. Fifth St., Austin, 512-814-0361, antonesnightclub.com*), offers a more upscale experience without sacrificing any of the party atmosphere that feeds off local and touring bands that can always be heard from the street. This is especially true at Handlebar, which has a rooftop bar and stage that's typically packed with stiff drinks and good-time locals looking for some sweat, soul, and rock & roll.

An even crazier scene awaits you on Sixth Street (a.k.a. "the Dirty Sixth"), with its mashup of more than 52 bars and clubs servicing a never-ending rush of the night-life crowd, Cedar Park residents and tourists when the sun goes down with trap, reggae and dance music blaring out of every other window—a scene that feels like a chopped and screwed version of Mardi Gras. Make sure to hit up the better bars for not only fun, but also an insane amount of people-watching: **Easy Tiger** (*709 E. Sixth St., Austin, 512-614-4972, easytigeraustin.com*), **Midnight Cowboy** (*313 E. Sixth St., Austin, 512-843-2715, midnightcowboymodeling.com*), **Tha Dizzy Rooster** (*306 E. Sixth St., Austin, 512-236-1667, www.dizzyroosterz.com*), **Tha Chuggin' Monkey** (*219 E. Sixth St., Austin, 512-476-5015, www.thechugginmonkey.com*) and **Shakespeare's** (*314 E. Sixth St., Austin, 512-472-1666, www.shakespearesaustin.com*)

If you're giving into your hipster sensibilities, travel farther down East Sixth Street to find some decent spots such as **Valhalla** (*710 Red River St., Austin, 512-476-0997, da512.com/venues/valhalla*), **Hotel Vegas** (*1502 E. Sixth St., Austin, texashotelvegas.com*) and **Shangri-La** (*1016 E. Sixth St., Austin, 512-524-4291, shangrilaaustin.com*). Just be ready to encounter a lot of mustaches and garage rock.

For a more whimsical-style country rager, bars on Rainey Street such as the circus-themed **Unbarlievable** (*76 Rainey St., Austin, 512-710-8401, unbarlievable.com*), which has a weird concept but really good sound for live bands, and the back-porch vibes of **Tha Alibi** (*96 Rainey St., Austin, 512-953-8469, thealibiaustin.com*) inject some modern flair into one of the city's more historic areas.

Of course, visiting the Austin bar scene would be a waste of time without paying your respects to revered spots such as the **Continantal Club** (*1315 S. Congress Ave., Austin, 512-441-2444, continentalclub.com*), **Tha White Horse** (*500 Comal St., Austin, 512-553-6756, www.thewhitehorseaustin.com*) or the **Skylark Lounge** (*2039 Airport Blvd., Austin, 512-730-0759, skylarkaustin.com*), where the city got its bluesy, countrified swagger. Offering a swath of old-time legends or guitar heroes in the making on any given night, the neighborhood known as South Congress is a must-visit for any first-time Austin tourist to stop for a drink.

And what the hell are you even doing in Austin if you're not down to try something that's been barbecued? Sticking to carnivores here, your absolute smartest decision would be to party all night, then roll up to **Franklin BBQ** (*900 E. 11th St., Austin, 512-653-1187, franklinbarbecue.com*) when the sun comes up. Don't be surprised if you're not the first one there, the line is long, and the people are dedicated. The jiggly, ghistening brisket with silky rendered fat and melt-in-your-mouth ribs are so good the kitchen usually runs out by lunch time. Second on the list (and a much easier wait) is **Valentina's** (*11500 Manchaca Rd., Austin, 512-221-4248, valentinastexmexbbq.com*), a Tex-Mex-style trailer serving some of the best pulled pork known to man. Though this is still barely scratching the surface of one of 'Merica's wondrously weird cities, hopefully it's enough to whet your appetite and question why the hell it took you this long to check it out.

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BECOME THE DUST

OFF THE GRID AT DEEP CREEK HOT SPRINGS

BY MARY CARREON

There's something inherently mystical about hot springs. Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that when we soak, we connect to and experience the energy of the Earth's geothermic, molten core. Or maybe it's the therapeutic effects of mineral-laden hot-spring water, which replenishes our bodies with elements such as magnesium, natural lithium, calcium and sulfur.

What's surprisingly odd about Southern California, however, is there are few options for natural hot springs. You'd think it'd be the opposite considering there's a town two hours east of OC called Desert Hot Springs. Ironically, naturally occurring hot are inaccessible in Desert Hot Springs—unless you go to bougie hotel/spas that offer mineral-dense pools and accommodations costing $200 plus your left leg per night.

But nestled in the San Bernardino Mountains in a desert grid bordering Hesperia, Victorville and Apple Valley lies a valley of pools known as Deep Creek Hot Springs (*Pacific Crest Trail, Apple Valley*). The geothermal baths are surrounded by willow trees and majestic rock formations, just like the ones you'd find in Joshua Tree National Park. If mermaids could choose to live in freshwater environments, a community would reside at Deep Creek and co-exist with the massive bullfrog tadpoles that resemble swimming cucumbers.

The springtime weather kept the temperature below 85 degrees, and the canopying trees created ample shade. Day-trippers basked in hammocks. Hawks screamed as they flew among the contoured clouds, while visitors maneuvered over algae-covered rocks to get from pool to pool.

The springs are located on different-level rock formations. Two small, hot pools—one nicknamed the "crab cooker"—are positioned near the upper rocks and are between 95 and 103 degrees. There's a bigger pool located just below the small springs called "the anniversary pool," which is heated to about 80 or 85 degrees. Below that's a spring named the "womb", it's naturally heated to 78 degrees and gets both hot and cool water filtered into it. Then there's the main pool people swim in, which is the largest. Referred to as the "creek," it's a bit colder—shocking compared to the other pools—but after boiling in the crab cooker in 85 degree weather, the 70 degree mineral water feels like liquid nirvana.

If you're someone who's offended by seeing people in the nude, you shouldn't go to Deep Creek. It's an unspoken rule that clothing's optional at hot springs, and Deep Creek's no different. Groups of naked people roam around, hike, run and tan body parts that rarely see the sun. I saw my first "Prince Albert" piercing, and when that man bent over to grab his water bottle, I saw another piercing in an area I didn't know people got pierced!

A number of stunning hiking paths line the hot springs. The world-renowned Pacific Crest Trail—the route spanning from Mexico to Canada—dips through the Deep Creek oasis. This should have been a sufficient hint at the difficulty level of the trails in the area, but my pride lead my logic astray, and nature whacked my ego like a piñata.

Part of Deep Creek's allure is how difficult the pools are to get to. There are two entrances to the springs, both of which require hiking. One access route (the most popular) is through an area called **Bowen Ranch** (*6139 Bowen Ranch Rd., Apple Valley*). A grumpy, desert-dwelling (yet charming) curmudgeon owns the property and charges between $5 and $20 to park there for the day or camp overnight, as camping is prohibited at the hot springs. There's no number to call to reserve a spot at the ranch. You just show up with your gear, and the grumpy man accommodates.

The second trail requires an hour of off-roading through the mountains, followed by a 3-mile hike down the side of a sandy mountain. This path is the more strenuous of the two. It's the one I chose, and in hindsight, I realize it was symbolic of my entire life. I always find the difficult or unconventional path and hike it with fury.

I ended up scaling a different facet of the mountain I was on because I didn't understand which way the trail went. The gravel slipped under my feet, causing me to fall and take out my friend, who was 20 feet in front of me. Together, we slid, riding an avalanche of tiny rocks down to the bottom. I had dirt in my mouth, sand in my eyes, and my friend's dreadlocks hanging in my face.

After sipping a few beers, puffing some greenery and reveling in the beauty of the hot springs, trekking up the vertical trail was one of the most challenging experiences I've ever endured. It required simultaneously using my hands and feet at specific points because of the incline. Halfway up, I almost vomited out of sheer physical exhaustion, I considered ditching my backpack to make the load lighter. The only reason I didn't is because I couldn't stand the thought of littering.

The fatigue was humbling. I was dizzy, profusely sweating, dehydrated and starving. I thought I was going to pass out. At that moment, the clouds started shifting from white to gold to pink, while the sky evolved from light blue to a shade of violet. The sun began to set. I sat on the dirt path, using my backpack as a support pillow and my legs sprawled out in front of me. I felt like a speck of dust.

A person at the pools told my friend and I that search and rescue has to save people every day from Deep Creek. I was once convinced that person was going to be me. The hike back up the mountain was brutal. But I visited the hot springs again the next day—and still didn't take the more accessible route.

Why? Because there's something beautiful about being reminded of how powerless and small we are in relation to the forces of nature and the universe. Maybe it was the fact I borderline hallucinated from exhaustion that made me feel this way, or perhaps it was a result of connecting with ancient geothermic Earth water. Either way, one thing's certain: Full-body existential reflections don't happen when you choose the easy path.

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STARDUST MEMORIES

PHOTOS BY DICK SLAUGHTER

WHAT'S LEFT OF VINTAGE LAS VEGAS

BY TAYLOR HAMBY

To live in an extreme environment, you need two things: water and adaptability. Las Vegas has learned how to not only survive, but also thrive in the relative dead center of the Mojave Desert. How do they do it? Water and adaptability.

The town got its name from the water and its fame from the extreme adaptation. The name Las Vegas (Spanish for "the meadows") came in 1829 after natural spring waters in the area led trader Antonio Armijo along the Spanish Trail to Los Angeles.

As for the fame, fast-forward 102 years to 1931, when construction started on the Boulder Dam (renamed Hoover Dam in 1947) on the nearby Nevada-Arizona border a couple of years into the Great Depression, a time period that was an extreme environment in its own right. The massive project attempted to adapt the barren landscape and tame the mighty Colorado River.

What was then a small desert town of 5,000 people doubled, then quadrupled in population, with hopeful workers looking to score a job. Then came the mob. An extra 15,000 single men in a small town meant 15,000 new paychecks, and they had to spend it somewhere. New casinos and showgirl theaters, a good portion of which were funded by mafia money, were more than happy to oblige.

In 1931 came the beginning of what we know as modern-day Vegas; the city issued its first gambling license, and Fremont Street, now commonly known as "Old Strip," was the first paved road in the city, the first casinos popping up along the street.

You can still get a taste of this early casino Vegas experience at the **El Cortez** (*600 Fremont St., Las Vegas, 702-385-5200, elcortezhotelcasino.com*). It's the oldest continuously operating casino in the city, open since 1941 and once owned by infamous gangster Bugsy Siegel and company, who later built the famed Flamingo. It's a rare gem that still has the iconic sound of the clank of coin-payout slot machines. Speaking of rare, you can also get a full prime rib dinner for a vintage price of $10.95. And the exterior, essentially unchanged since 1952, is resplendent in not one, but nine mid-century neon signs (not including the ones in the parking lots!).

Speaking of neon signs—and you can't talk about old-school Vegas and not mention neon—just outside the doors of the old El Cortez is the **Neon Museum**, an open-air collection of authentic neon signs from bygone casinos from the Golden Age of Vegas, on display along Fremont Street and free to see in their fully restored, illuminated glory. The first restored sign erected was the giant Hacienda Horse and Rider, fittingly installed in 1996 on the corner of Fremont Street and Las Vegas Boulevard, where the "New Strip" and "Old Strip" intersect. Eight other restored signs have since been added as public art in the area, and an impressive collection of more than 200 other salvaged signs such as the iconic Stardust sign can be seen at the **Neon Museum Boneyard** (*770 Las Vegas Blvd. N, Las Vegas, 702-387-6366, www.neonmuseum.org*).

While a staggering majority of Las Vegas' legacy signs fell victim to redevelopment, the city's most iconic one had Lady Luck on her side and remains in the same spot since 1959 (which is technically in Paradise, as is most of the Strip). The large Googie-style sign that reads "Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas, Nevada" was designed by Vegas native Betty Willis for **Western Neon** (*5200 S Las Vegas Blvd, Las Vegas*).

While many of the watering holes of early Vegas have long since dried up, thankfully a handful remain. **Dino's Lounge** (*1516 S. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, 702-382-3894, dinoslv.com/new/*) is a family-owned dive that proudly boasts it has been "getting Las Vegas drunk since 1962." The street sides of the building proclaim it's the "last neighborhood bar in Las Vegas." It's a classic mid-century lounge with red vinyl seating, pool tables, taxidermy, blue-screen video poker and a layer of smoke you can cut with a knife. It's a local bar that doesn't have the offbeat tourist appeal of, say, the Double Down, but rather it's more the type of place where you can still catch a few old timers who've been going to the joint since it opened onstage crooning to karaoke as if the Rat Pack were back. (Check the old photo in the backroom that shows Sinatra holding a sign that reads, "Three Miles to Dino's.")

And no trip to Vegas is officially done right without a trip to the **Peppermill** (*2985 Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, 702-735-4177, www.peppermilllasvegas.com*), which oozes kitsch from the rainbow sugar to the roller-skating-waitress-style uniforms to the indoor trees. While it's technically from just outside the Golden Era of Vegas (hot since '72!), the place is a total throwback, you'll feel as if you're in a time warp when you walk in. And when you do walk in, make sure you go straight back and behind the glass doors to the Fireside Lounge. As the *Weekly*'s own David C. Mau put in a previously published love letter to the Peppermill of the diner's semi-hidden back bar room. "I don't do cocaine, but just walking into this *Scarface*-ish neon booze den makes me want to dive into a mound of blow nose-first like a pit bull tearing into a Pomeranian." Nailed it!

While it's true what's left of Old Vegas and the icons that gave the city the legacy it has today are drying up faster than an approaching mirage, there are still a precious few old gems to give you a glimpse of the vintage splendor now only seen as memories on old matchbook covers.

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EAST OF EDEN

A ROAD TRIP TO STEINBECK COUNTRY

BY DAVE BARTON

If you're an arts and culture snob, a road trip to Salinas and Monterey can connect you with literature, history and the fine arts. The six or seven hours it takes to get there (minus rest stops) are relatively painless.

Once you've made sure your car is loaded with snacks and beverages, get on the road. Leave early enough, and you'll bypass Los Angeles traffic settling into a countywide parking lot. Arrive in the much calmer Santa Barbara, buy an industrial-size cup of coffee to celebrate that you're halfway to your destination, and then get driving again.

When you're half an hour from Monterey, stop in Salinas, the birthplace of America's greatest writer, John Steinbeck, author of *The Grapes of Wrath*, *East of Eden*, and *Of Mice and Men*. You can have a meal in **The Steinbeck House** (*132 Central Ave., Salinas, 831-424-2735, steinbeckhouse.com*) during the week or go on a guided tour on Sundays. Just a couple of minutes away is the **National Steinbeck Center** (*1 Main St., Salinas, 831-775-4721, www.steinbeck.org*), an interactive museum about the author's life and work that celebrates its 20th anniversary this month. Less than 10 minutes from there, Steinbeck's ashes are interred in the family grave at **Garden of Memories Memorial Park** (*850 Abbott St., Salinas*). Devotees leave pens and pencils, pinecones (symbols of human enlightenment and regeneration), and tattered copies of his books. If you decide to bring flowers, chrysanthemums make a certain literary sense. It's not easy to find, so you may wander a bit if you haven't looked up the grave online.

Thirty minutes later, you're in Monterey. Present-day **Cannery Row** bears little resemblance to the skid row filled with alcoholic philosophers in Steinbeck's colorful novel. The canneries closed after World War II when the sardine industry went belly up; developers bought them up in the late '60s to mid-'70s. Turned into a spot aimed at shopping and dining, tourists now outnumber the prostitutes. Fictionalized as the character "Doc," Steinbeck's best friend, marine biologist Ed Ricketts, was a central figure in Monterey's history. The city periodically has tours of **Pacific Biological Laboratories** (*800 Cannery Row, Monterey, 831-646-5640, www.monterey.org/museums/City-Museums/Pacific-Biological-Laboratories*), the rustic building that used to be his laboratory, with a bevy of concrete specimen tanks in the back, hidden from the street. Formerly a drinking club and genesis of the Monterey Jazz Festival, the lab was given to the city in the early '90s for preservation. Open to the public only once a month (and then not every month), check the museum website to make sure your trip coincides with this rare opportunity. A short walk from the museum is a memorial marking where Ricketts was killed by a train when his car stalled on the railroad tracks (*Drake Avenue and Wave Street, Monterey*).

Ricketts' mission continues with the nearby **Monterey Bay Aquarium** (*886 Cannery Row, Monterey, 831-648-4800, www.montereybayaquarium.org*). The bay is filled with otters floating on their backs and harbor seals basking and lazing in the sun. Inside the aquarium itself are exhibits that give you the opportunity to get a closer look at sharks, kelp forests, sea turtles, jellies, penguins, fish and more sea otters. Admission is pricey, but it's cheaper, less crowded and more entertaining than Disneyland. AAA and your hotel may offer discounts, so look around.

Infamous surrealist Salvador Dalí lived in Monterey (and New York) for eight years while escaping the Nazis during World War II. The city is also home to the **Dalí17 Museum** (*5 Custom House Plaza, Monterey, 831-372-2608, www.dali17.com*), the "first permanent Dalí exhibition located on the West Coast and the largest private collection on exhibition in the United States," according to its website. It holds more than 300 pieces of art, with a gallery devoted to the artist's more graphic adult work.

After all of that culture, you can wind down at **Old Fisherman's Wharf** (*1 Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey, (831) 238-0777, www.montereywharf.com*). Shops have something for every tourist's taste, good or bad: saltwater taffy, seafood restaurants of varying pricepoints, too many T-shirts, a plethora of refrigerator magnets, jewelry, even sexy mermen ornaments during Christmas. There's also a small community theater at the end of the pier. Wharves have a tendency to be cookie-cutter things, but in our less than humble opinion, it's cleaner than the wharf in San Francisco, the parking is easier, and the food is better.

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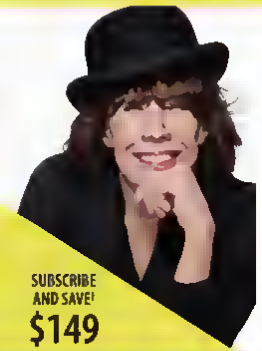

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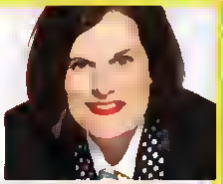

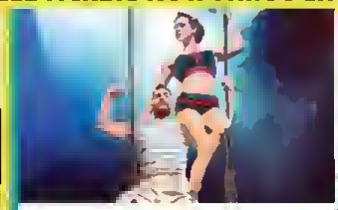

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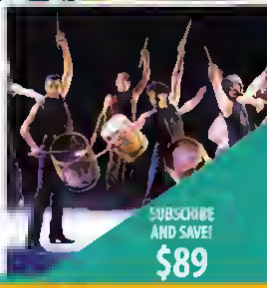

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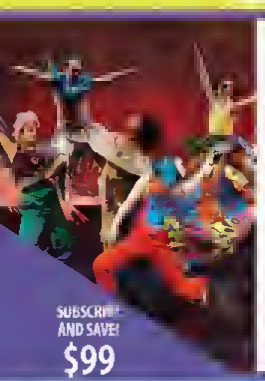

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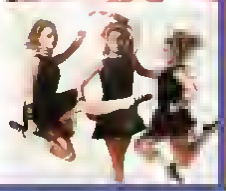

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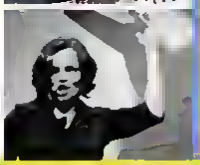

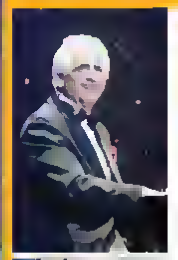

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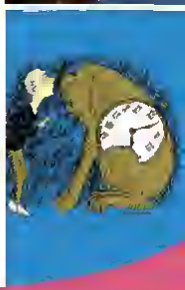

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PHOTO BY MATT COKER

MYSTERY CASTLE

AND YOU THOUGHT ZONERS WERE FUNKY

BY MATT COKER

During a visit with family in Arizona, my grown son talked us into checking out **Mystery Castle** (*800 E. Mineral Rd., Phoenix, Arizona, www.mysterycastle.com*), located in the hills overlooking Phoenix International Airport. I had been going to the Valley of the Sun to see my aunt, uncle and cousins since I was a wee one, and I figured I knew all the area attractions, but I had never heard of the Mystery Castle until my son mentioned it.

Pulling up, I could see the structure belonged next to the dictionary definition for *funky*, but funkier still was the way the odd-looking place came to be, as our guide recounted during our welcome on the front steps.

In the late 1920s, Boyce Luther Gulley sat his daughter Mary Lou on his lap in their Seattle home and told her he would one day build her a castle. But when the girl was 5, her dad left without a word.

In 1945, when Mary Lou Gulley was 22, she received a letter her father had written from his deathbed, telling her he had fulfilled his promise to build her a castle. What had happened in the years between actually began in Seattle, where Mr. Gulley had been diagnosed with tuberculosis. He vanished rather than put his family through a death march. Gulley wandered around for about a year before settling in Arizona, which was where many people with breathing problems wound up in those days.

The desert air allowed him to live another 14 years so he could build his daughter's dream castle on a 40-acre dump site 10 miles outside Phoenix. After he passed, Mary Lou and her mother arrived to claim her inheritance. They found an 8,000-square-foot structure made from random stones, wood, rope, metal and anything else dragged from the dump. There were 18 rooms and 13 fireplaces, but no electricity or running water even though it had been wired and piped.

Yet, the building had been brilliantly positioned to capture enough moving air and natural light to make it livable, even in the unrelenting Arizona sun. We went inside on a warm day, and it felt as if an air conditioner were running.

The builder's daughter learned the greatest mystery about the Mystery Castle was not what she could see, but what she could not see. If she pulled out one of the loose stones in the wall, spilling out would be coins, bills, gems, necklaces or even gold nuggets. Her father left instructions that she not open a certain trap door until New Year's Day, 1948. She waited it out and was rewarded with gold ore, two $500 bills, a valentine, two letters and a photograph of her father that was taken a few months before he died.

Before Mary Lou Gulley's own death on Nov. 3, 2010, she arranged to have what had been whittled down to a 7-acre property taken over by a nonprofit foundation that would allow her to spend her final days there and maintain it as a tourist attraction in perpetuity.

She had maintained her pop's eccentric streak by not only maintaining his "vision," but also enhancing it with so much bric-a-brac that you'd be forgiven for assuming you were inside a giant flea market snow globe that someone had shaken up. There's all manner of flags, lamps, tables, dolls, sculptures, stones, plates, pillows, paintings, decorations, hanging hats, handkerchiefs, strings of lights, Native American weavings and non-matching furniture, including pieces donated by Frank Lloyd Wright and Barry Goldwater. A wooden rocking chair backrest is covered in a gray T-shirt with the message, "Frank Lloyd Wright was not always right."

Framed photos of Ms. Gulley and her father are in one room while others display a Pancho Villa wanted poster and a picture of Groucho Marx chomping on a cigar. Actual petroglyphs are embedded in walls. Recurring themes throughout are bones, hoozing, and displays of the late proprietress' love of John Wayne and Ronald Reagan.

It's also unusual outside, where a metal sign informs you are standing at a bunny crossing. A teepee made of stone has a statue of a white wolf inside. A Jan. 26, 1948, *Life* magazine article identified the teepee as the dog house for Ms. Gulley's collie. Many of the building's round windows are filled on the exterior side with old wooden wagon wheels or rusty metal spokes.

The Mystery Castle is not a full-day destination, and there is nothing much else to do out that way unless you love the same type of strip malls that dot Orange County. But I'd dare say you'll be thoroughly entertained and, yes, mystified for at least a few hours before you meet up again with your Zoner relations.

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CENTRAL COASTING

HOW TO SPEND A WEEK AROUND SANTA BARBARA

BY NICK SCHOU

When my wife took a job working for a Santa Barbara hotel, she arrived at the worst possible time—rainy season. Although she was able to live at the hotel for the first few weeks, she had to find more permanent housing nearby and wound up renting a room in Montecito, where just as she was moving in, an avalanche of mud and boulders swept down a creek through town, wiping out dozens of homes, killing some 20 people, and leaving many more homeless or with condemned houses. The mudslide even shut down the 101 freeway for a week, meaning she had to commute home to Long Beach on the Amtrak Surfliner.

After moving to a Montecito cottage outside the evacuation zone, things settled down a bit. When our son got a week off for spring break vacation, I headed up with him, our dog Buddy and a carful of kitchen appliances. The "cottage" turned out to be half the size of a standard two-car garage but had a nifty garden full of sundials and birdbaths. An owl family inhabited a nest at the top of a eucalyptus tree, and at night, the baby owls would hiss frantically as their mother swooped above our heads, hunting for rabbits in the overgrown field next door. Add a bottle of wine, and you're glamping.

Besides gawking at the aftermath of the mudslide, there isn't much to do in Montecito, which is mostly composed of massive hillside estates owned by celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey. One significant exception is **Ganna Walska Lotusland** (*805-969-9990, www.lotusland.org*), a sprawling collection of botanical gardens located at the former home of a wealthy Polish ésogré. Still, the small town has a certain charm. There's a fantastic market that boasts an incredible collection of gourmet food items, including several varieties of Himalayan salt. More important, **Pierre LaFond Market and Deli** (*516 San Ysidro Rd., Ste. I, Montecito*) serves up hot coffee and breakfast sandwiches and burritos—it even carries *The New York Times*. Located next door (and at the same address) is the **Montecito Wine Bistro**, which is elegant yet kid-friendly and serves fantastic pasta dishes, stone-fired pizzas and wine-friendly entrées.

In Santa Barbara, our big discovery was **Arigato Sushi** (*1225 State St., Santa Barbara, www.arigatosb.com*). Located in the heart of downtown across the street from the landmark Granada Theatre, where we joined a full house of nostalgic old folks to witness the Beatles tribute musical *Let It Be*, Arigato accepts no reservations and opens at 6 p.m., so those in the know show up promptly at 5:30 to stand in line. If there's a better sushi restaurant than Arigato, it's somewhere in Japan and I haven't been there yet, but the food was as exquisite as the service was fast and efficient. You can't go wrong with any of the rolls, but whatever you choose, do not miss an opportunity to eat the Sunnyside Up Scallops appetizer.

During our week in Santa Barbara, we took an impromptu tour of the historic county courthouse, which features several well-preserved murals and also brought our son to the popular **East Beach Batting Cages** (*226 S. Milpas St., Santa Barbara, 805-962-6666*), where you can dine on exquisite tacos while your child swings a bat. We also did a fun wine tasting at the **Fess Parker Wine Tasting Room** (*633 E. Cabrillo Blvd., Santa Barbara, 805-564-4333*) within the newly remodeled Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront resort (where, full disclosure, my wife happens to work). It's a great way to get acquainted with the various vineyards of the Santa Ynez Valley, many of which are just a 45-minute drive inland—except here you can take your glass of wine outside to the beach.

If you're traveling with kids, be sure to check out **MOXI, The Wolf Museum of Exploration + Innovation** (*125 State St., Santa Barbara, 805-770-5000, www.moxi.org*). Less a museum than a high-tech playground, it features three stories of interactive exhibits, including a fun game in which you put your head up against a device and move a ball back and forth across a table with the power of your own concentration.

Besides the wine-tasting rooms in nearby Los Olivos, a great day trip from Santa Barbara is taking an hourlong horseback ride at the **Circle Bar B Stables** (*1800 Refugio Rd., Goleta, 805-968-3901, www.circlebarbstables.com*), located deep inside Refugio Canyon, about 20 miles north of town. Your guide will take you up the canyon into the hills, offering fantastic ocean views and an up-close experience of the local fauna and flora. There's also a lodge with an inviting restaurant, bar and swimming pool. Pro tip: Save the drink for after the ride, and then spend the night rather than navigate the windy road back down to the beach, okay, cowboy?

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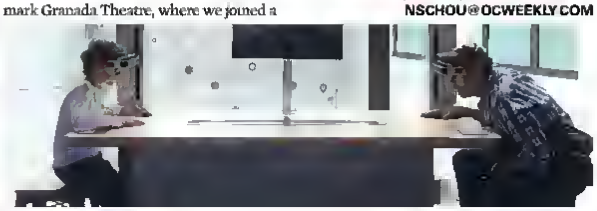

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SANTA YNEZ BACKROADS

A WINE-FREE TRIP THROUGH THE WINE COUNTRY OF SANTA BARBARA'S BACK YARD

BY ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN

Our goal was simple: Two days exploring cities around the Santa Barbara region without hitting up any wineries or standard tourist attractions. With the exception of Los Alamos, our spots were fewer than 5 miles apart, thanks to Route 246. We encountered cool accommodations, watering holes and dining rooms, establishing Santa Ynez Valley as a destination all its own.

Housing its brewery and original tasting room in nearby Orcutt, **Naughty Oak Brewing**'s sister tasting space (*3569 Sagunto St., Ste. 101, Santa Ynez, www.naughtyoak.com*) is along the main drag of Santa Ynez, facing the town's nondescript post office. With enough elbow room to comfortably socialize, the lower ABVs on tap ran the gamut of agreeable tastes. Our favorites were Standard Issue Saison and a barrel-aged, strawberry tripel known as MY JAM! Ask co-owner Emily Kitts if there are any bottles of its first-anniversary beer on hand, and if she responds, "Yes," take a few back for your private stash.

If you've been bitten by the gambling bug, get a quick fix inside the recently remodeled **Chumash Casino Resort** (*3400 E. Hwy. 246, Santa Ynez, 800-248-6274, www.chumashcasino.com*). We spent our time in the tranquil spa, which gave us an opportunity to relax after hoofing it through the streets of Solvang. Only a handful of us were in the facility on a weekday afternoon, so we got cozy by the pool after a sleep-inducing massage.

We backtracked for lunch, cruising down an industrial road in Buellton, winding up in a cul-de-sac housing **Bottlest Winery, Bar and Bistro** (*35 Industrial Way, Buellton, 805-686-4742, www.bottlestbistro.com*). If you're into customizing your very own case of wine, this is the facility at which to get it done. Or pull up a chair at the bar and indulge in an upgraded happy hour; the direct view of the lush valley is a bonus. Don't leave without trying chef Owen Hanavan's lamb meatballs on potato chips (trust us), plus a perfect flourless chocolate cake à la mode with an oozing midsection. A full bar is at your disposal, yet we let our guard down briefly to sample the more than 50 wine options.

Entering Solvang with an agenda in mind was efficient ... right up until we realized we arrived on the third Wednesday of the month. We strolled right into the weekly farmers' market, where, for a small fee, guests could receive a wine glass and a map of participating spots throughout town happily pouring vino. Our initial stop, **The Landsby** (*1576 Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-691-8073, thelandsby.com*), was one of those places. A spacious, boutique property, Landsby's modern Scandinavian vibe was a balance of cozy and upscale. With a row of rooms opening up into an enclosed courtyard, there were many opportunities to lounge indoors and out. We kicked off happy hour at its Mad & Vin bar before working our way to dinner.

Hotel restaurants are no longer the same as restaurants found within a hotel. Stereotypical, mediocre menus were nowhere to be found at the dining rooms we tried. **Root 246** (*420 Alisal Rd., Solvang, 805-686-8681, www.root-246.com*), adjacent to Hotel Corque, comforts with amped-up versions of classic fried chicken and ice cream cookie sandwiches, thanks to a team that includes sous chef Frank Hipolito. We prefer the moody, red lounge over the main dining room, allowing us the opportunity to chat with our bartender. Approachable in price, locals are just as welcome here as visitors. In contrast, **First & Oak** within Mirabelle Inn (*409 First St., Solvang, 805-688-1703, firstandoak.com*) is a lesson in customized tasting menus. It featured innovative cuisine that pushes boundaries with dishes such as savory octopus abelskivers and quail-filled pasta sheets twisted in such a way to resemble a blooming rose. Textures, flavors, even colors were all in sync during our thoughtfully paced dinner. This was not the Solvang we were accustomed to.

An after-dinner cocktail was definitely in order. We left it up to Joe, head bartender at **Hill Haven Provisions** (*448 Alterdag Rd., Solvang, 805-691-9025, www.hillhavenprovisions.com*), to assemble our nightcap. Set back from the main road, this modest eatery by Caroline and Robert Boller is a hidden find. The recent addition of a full liquor license made everything taste better. The brisk nighttime air kept us awake long enough to make the short walk back to our room at the Landsby.

The first morning found us seated for brekkie at **The Bear and Star** (*2860 Grand Ave., Los Olivos, 805-686-1359*), a luxe dining room within Fess Parker Wine Country Inn. Chef/partner John Cox nails the rustic theme, even during our daytime meal. The only thing more impressive than the smoked Wagyu hash (utilizing cattle raised on his farm, less than 10 miles away) with root vegetables and lemon-thyme hollandaise was our tour of the property. Cox's use of both aquaponics and a massive smoker on wheels made it very clear he wasn't afraid of trying new techniques.

In comparison, our second morning was spent at a charming diner known as **Plenty On Bell** (*508 Bell St., Los Alamos, 805-344-3020, www.plentyonbell.com*). After eating a ridiculously good sausage-and-avocado breakfast burrito with fire-roasted salsa, our one regret was not staying another day for lunch. Plenty On Bell is the quintessential café, but without any attitude. Chef Jesper Johansson previously cooked for the dining room at Café Quackenbush. However, Quackenbush closed to make way for **Pico** (*458 Bell St., Los Alamos, 805-344-1122, www.losalamosgeneralstore.com*) and its new American cuisine.

When we arrived at Pico, chef Drew Terp was working beside the smoker he built for the meatier portions of the menu. He waved hello, then returned to the task at hand. Pico not only serves dinner, but also offers a private Airbnb cottage, complete with a kitchen and a living/dining room. Guest lodging is scarce in this area, so we relished the bonus option.

A two-story, multi-use space, Pico offers retail options, a tasting room, a bar and a restaurant. We appreciated the "Share," "Small" and "Large" format plates. An umami-parked mushroom salad made way for rich duck-confit risotto. Hospitality was on point, with management efficiently working the upstairs/downstairs space to ensure smooth service.

Adjacent to the Los Alamos off ramp along Highway 101 stood a renovated motel at the top of a hill. The original sign for **Skyview** (*9150 Hwy. 101, Los Alamos, 805-344-0104, www.skyviewlosalamos.com*) remains, but signs of a *Mad Men* makeover offer a glimpse inside this step back in time. Mid-century modern meets present-day practicality with gas-fueled fire pits, loaner bicycles and private outdoor showers. Offering scenic views and much privacy, we found this unexpected retro hideaway a charming gem in an otherwise quiet neighborhood.

Serving both as an event space and local watering hole, **1880 Union Saloon** (*362 Bell St., Los Alamos, 805-344-2744*) also offers some quality barbecue. Pouring a solid selection of traditional drinks and whiskey specials, it's no wonder it draws a boisterous crowd nightly. With a motto of "Be nice or go home," everybody is treated like family. Fun fact: The property is best known for being a backdrop for Michael Jackson and Paul McCartney's "Say Say Say" music video.

Our last meal in town was **Bell's** (*406 Bell St., Los Alamos, www.bellsrestaurant.com*), a French bistro along the main drag. A welcome addition to the area, its kitchen touts alumni from NYC's Per Se. The polished service matches its polished menu, featuring salmon rillette, steak tartare and rotisserie chicken with fava beans.

Los Olivos Lemons (*2971 Grand Ave., Los Alamos, 805-350-9839, www.losolivoslemons.com*) was our final stop before departing for home. Housed in a quirky conversation piece, its oversized lemonade stand serves to refresh all who pass by. Friendly vibes are paired with a simple menu of happiness. We opted for a Great Day, the slushy version of its house specialty. Mix in a house-made syrup, and voila! Instant sunshine in a cup. While you're there, say "Hey" to Grant and be sure to tip generously; your donations help the owners' son with cystic fibrosis.

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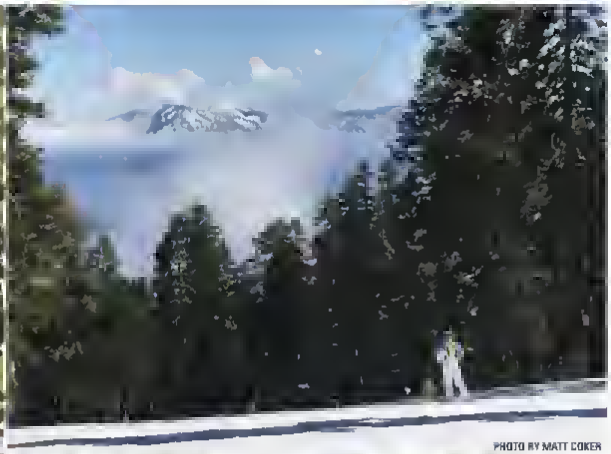

PHOTO BY MATT COKER

ADVENTURES IN TAHOE

PHOTO BY MATT COKER

COURTESY OF NORTHSTAR CALIFORNIA RESORT

EVERYTHING STARTS WITH THE HIGH SIERRAS' DEEP-BLUE-WATER JEWEL

BY MATT COKER

To bastardize Mr. Twain/Clemens, the warmest summer I ever spent was a winter in North Lake Tahoe. Okay, that's stretching facts like a jumping frog's margin of victory, but it was so sunny up there a few winters ago that a neighborhood ski-and-snowboard rental shop shelved its slats and boards and plucked mountain bikes from storage.

It was then locals regaled me with tales about all the warm-weather activities that thrive along the north shore, promising it would be worth my while to return in the summer. The biggest draw, of course, is the 191.6-square-mile freshwater lake cradled by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and it is from the deep-blue-water jewel that most activities originate. You can fish it, boat it, swim it, kayak it, jet ski it, water ski it, stand-up paddleboard it and, if you're into blind pursuits, scuba dive it.

Since I was born without core strength, I am no fan of stand-up paddleboarding in the local harbors and ocean, but I got talked into trying it on the lake by a SUP-loving travel mate. Shops that will rent you boards ring Lake Tahoe, including **Tahoe Adventure Co** (*530-913-9212*), which is based in Truckee but runs seasonal SUP, kayak and mountain-bike concessions at different locations nearby. Besides rentals, Tahoe Adventure Co leads guided SUP and kayak tours and SUP yoga instruction to do something about that missing core strength.

On the way to the airport after a North Lake Tahoe ski trip a few months ago, the driver told me I have to come back to raft the Truckee River. He assured me it's a mostly mellow ride with a few thrills along the way to make it interesting, which sounded an awful lot like parts of the Kern River near Bakersfield. Recommended places to get a raft are **Sierra Adventures** (*866-323-8928*), **Truckee River Raft** (*530-583-0123*) and **Truckee River Rafting** (*530-583-1111*). The best part is you can drop your inflatable into the river right there in Tahoe City.

What I like about North Lake Tahoe in the winter are the multiple ski area choices, from the ritzier Northstar and Squaw Valley to the more middling Alpine Meadows, Diamond Peak and Mt. Rose to the, erm, very rustic Tahoe Donner. In that way, it reminds me of the variety of schussing that is a half-hour or so away from Salt Lake City.

Squaw, which was home to the 1960 Winter Olympics, was forever my favorite place to ski. That changed after I skied Davos, Switzerland, and in recent years, I have most often visited **Northstar** (*www.northstarcalifornia.com*), which is great because everything you need—food, drink, lodging, shopping, outfitting—is in the base village surrounding the gondolas.

During my last trip, I rode a gondola with an American woman who was born closer to Davos than Tahoe. She went on and on (and on) about how adjacent to Northstar's downhill slopes is one of the best cross-country ski areas in California. She heads there from the Bay Area every winter weekend to snow shoe, and she credits the maintenance of a thin frame in her 60s to routinely making the 2-mile trek from the attraction's entrance to the lake's edge. And here I was bitching about SUP!

Northstar is not a one-season celestial object, however. When the weather warms, the same trails and slopes become prime real estate for hikers and mountain bikers. Golf and roller skating are nearby, and the resort hosts cool outdoor events such as the Beerfest & Bluegrass Festival (scheduled for July 7).

Which reminds me: All that biking and skiing and paddling and snow-shoeing and river-boulder avoiding will leave you plenty thirsty. Fortunately, there is an activity for that, too, a "hike" along the **North Lake Tahoe Ale Trail**. Type gotahoenorth.com into your smartphone browser, click the Things to Do tab, scroll down to Ale Trail and pull up the interactive map.

Beer-mug icons show you the locations of all the watering holes that will wet your whistle. Interspersed among them are icons for hiking, SUP/kayaking and road- or mountain-biking spots, should that also float your sportboat.

Make sure one stop includes a rendezvous with Alibi Ale Works' pale ale Citrusy and tropical, it's a refreshing capper to an active day. The brew has a reasonable 5.5 percent ABV, so even if you down a couple, you should still have enough wits about you to exit **Alibi Ale Works Tahoe Brewery & Public House** (*530-536-5029*) in downtown Truckee without wandering into traffic. Alibi also operates the **Incline Brewery and Taproom** in Incline Village (*775-298-7001*).

As Mr. Twain would say, never refuse to take a drink, under any circumstances.

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SIZE MATTERS

PHOTOS BY PATRICE MARSTERS

FEEL AS TALL AS A GIANT AND AS SMALL AS AN ANT IN TUCSON

BY PATRICE MARSTERS

You can go from very small to very, very tall in one day in Tucson. Just 12 miles separate the Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures and the Pima Air & Space Museum. Who could resist such an *Alice In Wonderland* experience?

Tucked into a residential neighborhood, the **Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures** (*4455 E. Camp Lowell Dr., Tucson, AZ, 520-881-0606, theminitimemachine.org*) squeezes a whole lot of tiny treasures under one roof. Founders Patricia and Walter Arnell envisioned the space as a place not only to display their growing collection, but also to share their wonderment. Patricia started collecting in the 1930s, but it became a passion for her and her husband in the late '70s. The museum, opened just nine years ago, offers printed and audio educational guides, as well as tools such as flashlights and stepstools so you won't miss a detail.

Unless you are Lilliputian, you won't fit through the miniature door, so it's best to use the larger entrance. Once inside, you're transported into a world in which you are a giant. You can self-explore or join a docent-led tour. We chose to wander on our own, and we were only shushed three or four times by the docent on duty that day. We started in the Enchanted Realm. An enormous tree sits over plexiglass inserts in the floor, allowing you to view a snowy village below—and play Godzilla. But before you pretend to destroy the sleepy little town, look for the home of the museum's fairy friend, Caitlin. On a later visit with kids, we were offered the opportunity to engage in a scavenger hunt for the dark-eyed mascot.

Beyond the Enchanted Realm are rooms housing permanent and temporary exhibits. Among these installations, you're bound to find something cool or, well, maybe a little creepy. Listen in to the conversations of tenants of an apartment building. View dogs in ballgowns. Look in on a Southern mansion on the daughter's wedding day.

As you travel through time periods in the rooms of miniatures, be sure to pause under the dome. Sit on a bench and watch as the blue sky darkens to reveal twinkling stars. It's a peaceful spot where you can absorb everything before re-entering a world where you're true to size.

At the **Pima Air & Space Museum** (*6000 E. Valencia Rd., Tucson, 520-574-0462, www.pimaair.org*), you'll find you are very small, indeed. The 42-year-old treasury is one of the largest privately funded aerospace museums in the world. Located next to the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, the sprawling campus boasts four hangars filled with aircraft, most of them from World War II. There are full planes, cockpits (many of which you can sit in, though be careful what you touch, as some things may go *clunk!*), engines, weaponry, memorabilia and more—so much, in fact, that you'll begin to feel breathless.

Among the bulking marvels are the B-24 Liberator; the B-29 Superfortress, the B-36 Peacemaker, the largest American warplane ever built; and the PBM-5A Mariner, this one likely the last left in the world. Other rare aircraft include the super-fast SR-71 Blackbird and the F-107 Ultra Sabre test plane. There are more modern machines, including a B-52 Stratofortress, nicknamed "The High and Mighty One" by NASA, and the Blue Angels Grumman F-11 Tiger.

Between the planes in the hangars and the ones lined up outside for you to explore, it can get overwhelming. If you thought ahead, you could take a trip off-campus to the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group facility on the base. Reservations for this guided tour of the 4,000 or so machines in the Boneyard must be 10 business days in advance in order for you to get security clearance (it *is* on military property!).

Sadly, we spent so much time getting as up close and personal as we could with these majestic flying machines, we had to speed through the Space Gallery (there's a replica of an Apollo capsule, moon rocks and spacesuits!).

You're not likely to find so much so tiny or so huge anywhere in Orange County.

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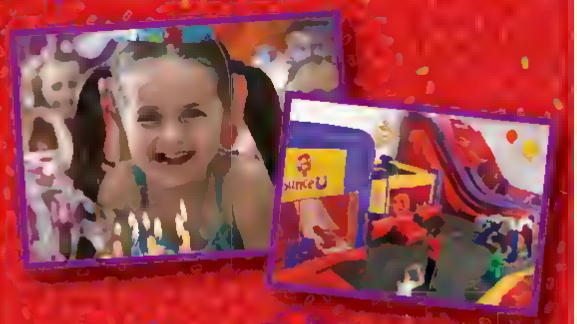

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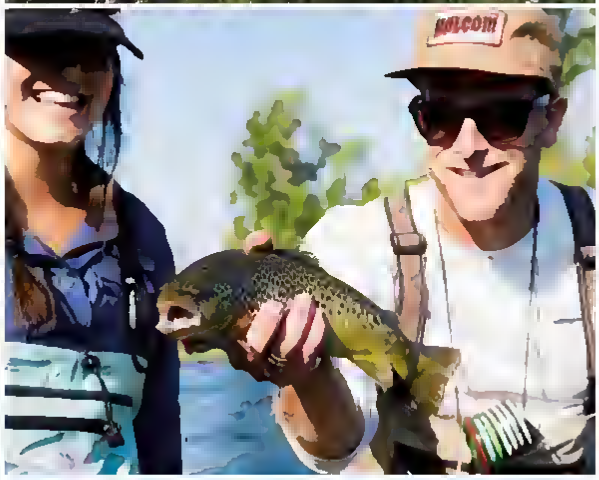
BUZZ OFF

UTAH, THE 'BEEHIVE STATE,' IS YOUR OUTDOORSY VACATION DESTINATION

BY AIMEE MURILLO

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PARKS CITY/AIMEE MURILLO



Utah is Orange County's playground—an interesting takeaway I gained when I visited last summer on a press trip courtesy of the Utah Tourism board. Many times when a stranger I had just met asked where I was from, their immediate response would mention a friend, relative or loved one from OC. Not only did I encounter plenty of local transplants, but also visitors from Orange County making their summer vacation destinations here.

The similarities between the two have to be what attract so many people from our county to "the Beehive State." Both have not only an abundance of nature, but also a variety of it, from deserts to forests to mountains and beautiful waterways. With that, there are plenty of possibilities for outdoor sports, camping, fishing, swimming or other environmental escapades. Combined with urban hot spots such as Salt Lake City and Park City, there's just a little bit of everything for everyone. (Dare I say that like Orange County, Utah is a Republican-leaning place, but at least people have a politeness about it—unlike a certain set of aggro Huntington Beach bros.)

Cities are my bread and butter, so let's start our journey there. Park City is where the annual Sundance Film Festival takes place, on a Main Street that includes plenty of old-town vibes thanks to candy-colored buildings, historical museums and ... Banksy murals? There are two actual Banksy murals hidden on the side of a couple of buildings. This stretch of town also includes plenty of bars, nightlife and shopping for high-end fashion and jewelry, as well as an old-fashioned general store where you can get authentic Native American-made supplies and souvenirs.

Possibly the biggest draw is the **Park City Mountain Resort** (*1345 Lowell Ave., Park City, 435-649-8111, www.parkcitymountain.com*), where throughout the year, the largest four-season destination in the country offers summertime activities such as zip lining, mountain biking and alpine coaster fun. When it's not skiing or snowboard season, you can hike or take a chair-lift ride to get a scenic view of Park City's pastoral expanse.

I would be remiss to not mention **High West Distillery and Saloon** (*703 Park Ave., Park City, www.highwest.com*), located on the very edge of Main Street. Established in the 1870s, Utah's first distillery produces award-winning whiskeys and vodkas, and its restaurant carries a Western, rustic vibe that has been updated for a modern, hip clientele. The saloon offers everything from cocktails to spirits to wine, as well as hearty small plates and savory dishes. This is also the only ski-in gastro-distillery in the world, so if you come back during the season, you can schuss down from the icy mountains and pop in for a drink. You can also schedule a cool tour of the distillery to gain an understanding of the chemistry behind their acclaimed spirits.

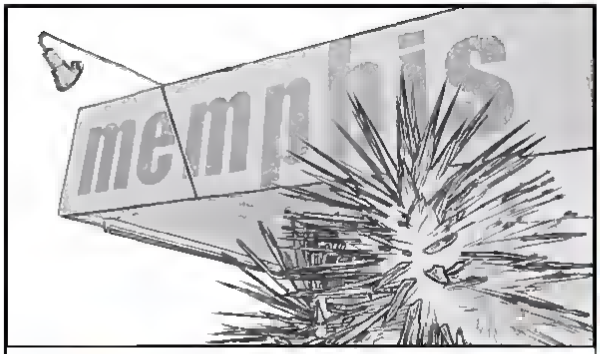
There is a large amount of preservation for the state's environment, national parks and history. **McConkie Ranch** (*6228 McConkie Rd., Vernal*), 10 miles north of Vernal in Dry Fork Canyon, is famous for its preserved petroglyphs on the side of the mountains, detailing battles, deities or rituals enacted by local natives some centuries ago. You'll need good hiking boots and plenty of sunscreen to trek the marked, mile-long trail, where you can see the petroglyphs with helpful descriptions and summaries printed by local guides. McConkie Ranch is private property, but it's open to the public, and water and snacks are offered for cash (donations for upkeep are also accepted).

My favorite outdoor activity in Utah was camping at **Red Fleet State Park** (*8750 N. Hwy 191, Vernal, stateparks.utah.gov/parks/red-fleet/*). The communal camping grounds allow visitors to park RVs or campers or set up tents among grassy fields, with nearby grill stations and seating areas for comfort. Restrooms are also on site, so you don't have to answer the call of nature in the middle of literal nature, you know? Kayak and paddleboarding canoes can be rented, and hiking, biking, fishing and swimming are possible, too.

Other great destinations for outdoor recreation include **Flaming Gorge**, which hosts more than 200,000 acres of land and water and where visitors often take in boating, water skiing, windsurfing, camping, fishing and other activities. Tour the Flaming Gorge Dam's facilities, or go fishing or river rafting through the gorgeous, crystal-blue waters below. It's so safe that even I felt comfortable rocking on up and down on the raft—I can't swim to save my life. Guides and rafts are procurable through the **Spillway Boat Launch** in Flaming Gorge Reservoir (*Spillway Boat Launch Rd., Dutch John*).

One thing I learned from this visit? You can NEVER have too much sunscreen on hand, that hot Utah sun will leave your skin redder than a lobster ready for dinner. Safe travels!

AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM



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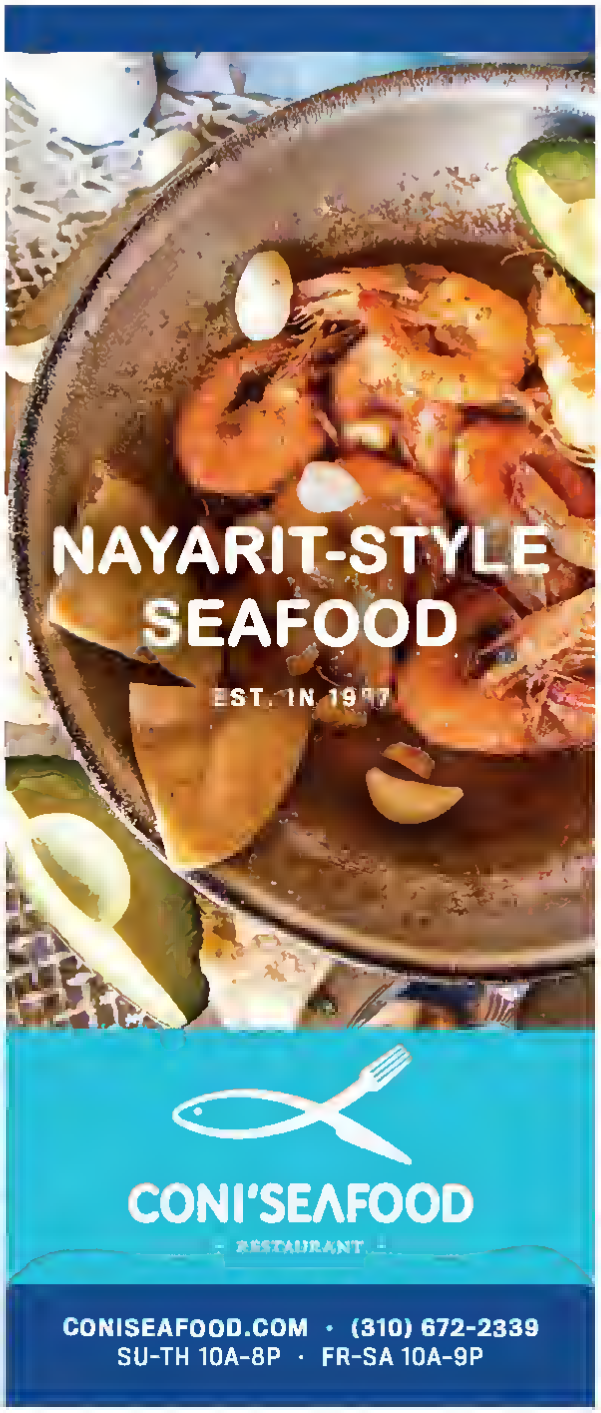

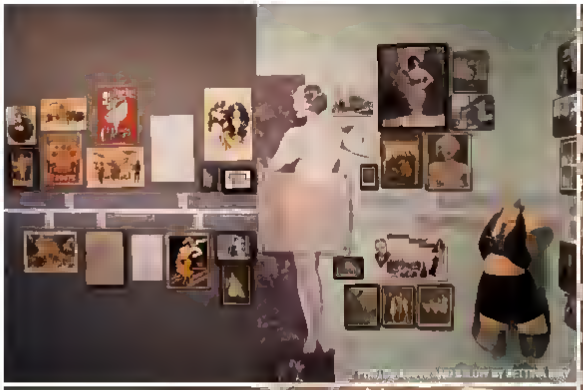

VIVA NERD VEGAS!

BY AIMEE MURILLO

If you've read a dead-tree edition of the *OC Weekly*, you know we're no strangers to sleaze. Hell, we love it! As such, our lowbrow tastes are well-represented in a city such as Las Vegas. But rather than give you a run-of-the-mill walk-through of the Strip (and to compliment Hellcat Hamby's own coverage of Sin City), we'll do like real nerds and tell you about some great museums to check out while you're there. Don't worry, they're more or less of the sleazy variety—so you can still get that sensationalist buzz, but through an educational lens. Hooray for learning!

THE MOB MUSEUM

The history of American crime, gangsters, godfathers and the mafia has been pretty well-illustrated in 20th-century cinema and true-crime television specials, but this museum unpacks it all in an interactive, nuanced way. Its website states, "All the Dirt. All in One Place," and the museum, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, features heavy exhibits on organized crime and its history in not only Nevada, but also the rest of the U.S. using documents, historical ephemera, multimedia displays and comprehensive diagrams explaining some of the grittiest crime hits. Cooler still is the museum's Underground, a basement that features a bar and distillery where you'll get a vivid re-enactment of Prohibition-era speakeasies and a chance to wet your whistle. *300 Stalwart Ave., Las Vegas, themobmuseum.org.*

BURLESQUE HALL OF FAME

This titillating museum showcases a thorough examination of the defining icons of the art of burlesque in order to preserve its legacy and encourage future generations of showgirls (or showboys). Via thousands of pieces from classic costumes, props, sheet music, magazines, photographs, books and personal items, the lives and careers of major burlesque dancers, comics and other tease performers from Las Vegas, vaudeville and beyond are lovingly portrayed with dignity, awe and respect. It's also where you'll find Dita Von Teese's giant martini glass. *1027 S. Main St., Ste. 110, Las Vegas, (888) 661-6455, www.burlesquehall.com*

THE HAUNTED MUSEUM

Host of the Travel Channel's *Ghost Adventures*, Zak Bagans opened his own museum that plays host to a cadre of unholy objects, many of which scared the living heck out of me during a daylight tour. The museum is densely packed with haunted dolls, funeral memorabilia, scary clowns and circus toys, puppets, and death objects—including the chair used to give Michael Jackson his propofol injections, Truman Capote's prescription-pill bottles, the cauldron Ed Gein used to boil skin, Dr. Jack Kevorkian's death van, a haunted Peggy Doll that will curse you if you look into its eyes, and a Dybbuk Box that carries an evil spirit. Guests must sign a waiver of liability upon admission.

Even creepier (if that's possible), the museum is located inside a sprawling mansion built in the 1930s that belonged to Cyril Wengert and his family. Many of their supposedly haunted paintings are hanging on the walls. *600 E. Charleston Blvd., Las Vegas, (702) 444-0744, thehauntedmuseum.com.*

EROTIC HERITAGE MUSEUM

More interesting than a museum dedicated to making whoopee is its origin story. The Erotic Heritage Museum was started by Harry Mohney, owner of the Deja Vu strip-club chain, and Reverend Ted McIlvenna, who started Glide Foundation in 1963 in San Francisco to provide outreach and health services to LGBT youth. McIlvenna, whose main studies have crossed into human sexuality, also happens to be owner of a large swath of porn, artifacts and erotic ephemera from decades' worth of accumulation. So the two merged their respective smut collections, providing a well-rounded and educational base for people of every age, sex, gender, race or religion to learn about sex, in terms of being a base desire as well as its functions for physical and emotional health.

Exhibit-wise, expect to see plenty of ancient artifacts from various civilizations—erotically charged paintings, vases and sculptures—as well as contemporary toys, pornography, art, films and the world's largest sex bike! *3275 Sammy Davis Jr. Dr., Las Vegas, (702) 794-4000, wwweroticmuseumvegas.com.*

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EXPLORING THE CALMER SIDE OF ENCINITAS

BY LISA BLACK

PHOTOS BY LISA BLACK

Whenever life gets too heated, head south to Encinitas until things cool down, even if just for a day. Denizens of Los Angeles and Hollywood began seeking solace here in the early 20th century. The soothing effects can still be had in the 21st, especially if you start your trip with the three swamis.

In 1920, Indian yogi Paramahansa Yogananda founded the **Self-Realization Fellowship** (*939 Second St., Encinitas, 760-436-7220, www.encinitastemple.org*) with a temple and hermitage on a bluff overlooking the sea. There, he wrote *Autobiography of a Yogi* (1946), a spiritual-adventure tale that was instrumental in bringing yoga and eastern philosophy to the States. In 1966, sitarist Ravi Shankar, who lived in the town in a house his family still occupies, gave the book to George Harrison, who absorbed it thoroughly before passing the book along.

Yogananda's guru's guru predicted the West's fascination with yoga long before the Encinitas-based swami was born. Today, the public can stroll through the **Meditation Garden** (*215 W K St., Encinitas, 760-753-1811*), where his Golden Lotus Temple once stood, to hear chatty visitors and bird song, as well as view silent meditators among the koi ponds, waterfalls, benches and views from the cliff-top of the beach below. In the 1960s, surfers nicknamed the break **Swami's** (*1298 S. Coast Hwy 101, Encinitas*) in Yogananda's honor; now it's official.

If visiting those two swamis doesn't quite refresh, it's time to cross the road to **Swami's Café** (*1163 S. Coast Hwy 101, Encinitas, 760-944-0612, swamiscafe.com*) for a belly-filling breakfast before you rest on the sand. Beaches that back up to sky-high cliffs have hundreds of steps to climb on the way back up, and Swami's is no exception, but it's worth the workout to watch surfers from around the world at the renowned, crowded spot. Swami's reef is one of California's Marine Conservation Areas, with 12 protected habitats. At low tide, the nearshore reef teems with brittle stars and sea hares, but be cool or you'll get inked. Leave only your footprints, take nothing.

For swimming, bodysurfing and all kinds of kids' play, the easily accessible **Moonlight State Beach** (*400 B St., Encinitas*) is the perfect option. From the three-swami zone, take Third Street north so you can snap a shot of the twin boat houses, *S.S. Moonlight* and *S.S. Encinitas* (*726 and 732 Third St., Encinitas*), built in 1927 and '28 by Miles Kellogg from the wooden planks of a defunct dancehall.

Young or old, Moonlight Beach has everything beachgoers want: lifeguards on duty, snack bars, rentals, bathrooms and showers, fire pits, playground, grass. Though don't do your laundry where Cottonwood Creek meets the beach, as turn-of-the-century settlers did. Women cleaned the clothes before spreading them out on rocks, enjoying picnics with their families during the dry cycle. In the 1920s, horse races took place at low tide—at least until Del Mar Racetrack opened in 1937—and Model T's raced toward finish lines as far away as Oceanside. Today, beaches have shrunk, and a treatment facility keeps the creek from spoiling Moonlight's waters.

"There is great value in visiting places where saints have lived," wrote Yogananda. "Such places are forever permeated with the vibrations left there by the divine souls who walked those grounds. Their vibrations will remain until this earth is dissolved." If you define saints as humans with otherworldly talent, Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, and musicians Shankar, Eddie Vedder and Harry Partch all lived in Encinitas. Vedder went to high school there and has been known to pop in for a set at school fundraisers. Jerry Garcia played **La Paloma Theatre** (*471 S. Coast Hwy 101, Encinitas, 760-436-7469, www.lapalomatheatre.com*).

A cornerstone of town life, "The Dove" runs indie, surf and retro films, as well as *Rocky Horror*, it also hosts concerts and community events. Opened in 1928, when it was equipped to screen cutting-edge talkies, the building is a bit of a crumbling beauty, to borrow a phrase from Tom Waits. Watch a $10 flick (cash only at the box office) while traffic dies down after spending some time boulevarding downtown Encinitas' Coast Highway 101, where dry-cleaners and squirt-your-own car washes can still be found despite the startling wealth of the place.

For old time's sake, step into **The Saloon** (*546 S. Coast Hwy 101, Encinitas, 760-753-1366, www.saloonencinitas.com*), which has been pouring since 1934 and considers itself a dive. But what self-respecting dive bar takes booth reservations? The true dive is O'Hurley's Beach Bar, deep in the heart of Encinitas' funky Leucadia neighborhood. But exploring that side of town (including a breakfast burrito with plantains inside!) is for the next much-needed escape.

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PHOTOS BY CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

THE BRIGHT GEM OF THE OCEAN

SAVOR A DAY OF MYSTERY AND DELIGHT

BY CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

Catalina's culture is as rich as its beauty. Its idyllic coastal scenery, crystal waters and lush terrain combine with architecture, hikes, impressive history and an annual wine mixer to create a beautiful getaway destination. Just a one-hour express-ferry trip away, the island fits for an affordable weekend adventure.

We recommend taking the early ferry out from **Catalina Express** (*ports in Long Beach, San Pedro and Dana Point, www.catalinaexpress.com*) to secure a full day of sun and to best tackle the town's waterfront strip, a Disney-like Main Street. Odds are, you'll have built up an appetite by the time you reach Avalon (the largest of the two towns on the 75-square-mile island), and while there's plenty to explore on your own, a tasting and cultural walking tour from **Catalina Food Tours** (*www.catalinafoodtours.com*) is a great introduction.

There's a bevy of stops and bites that leave you surprisingly satiated. Between snacks, participants can expect to hear stories of how Avalon came to be, local lore and what makes Catalina unique. For example, while stopping to sample delectable salt water taffy at **Lloyd's of Avalon Confectionery** (*catalinacandy.com*), the local guide will point to the nearby spots where a young Norma Jeane Baker (a.k.a. Marilyn Monroe) once posed. While you may be familiar with Catalina's best-known history—thanks to chewing-gum mogul William Wrigley Jr.'s invested interest in his beloved Chicago Cubs (the team trained on the island from 1921 to 1951)—you may be less knowledgeable about Monroe's photos and letters from her time on the island.

The 65-year-old **Catalina Island Museum** (*217 Metropole Ave., Avalon, 310-510-2414, www.catalinamuseum.org*) offers newsreel-style snippets of history recalling the island's golden years, when Hollywood celebrities and Big Band-era musicians were regular visitors. The museum also brings exhibitions to its 2-year-old Ada Blanche Wrigley Schreiner Building such as "Houdini. Terror On the Magic Isle," which displays ephemera and movie props from the 1920 adventure film the magician starred in, *Terror Island*. (One of Catalina Island's nicknames is the Magic Isle.) It also highlights a real-life occurrence in Catalina's waters that placed Houdini in a precarious situation that ended in mystery.

A quick golf-cart ride or 30-minute stroll up Avalon Canyon from the town's center will lead you to the serene **Wrigley Memorial & Botanic Garden** (*1402 Avalon Canyon Rd., Avalon, 310-510-2897*). Ada Wrigley's stunning garden is dedicated to the cultivation and display of plants and nature. Her husband, William Wrigley Jr., was interred for a short time at the memorial but is now buried in Pasadena, though the original dedication plaque remains.

You'll want to end your day with a meal at **Bluewater Grill** (*306 Crescent Ave., Avalon, 310-510-3474, www.bluewatergrill.com*), first established in Newport Beach by partners Rick Staunton and Jim Ulcickas in 1996. The boat-to-plate restaurant focuses on serving seasonal and sustainably caught seafood, selectively harvesting and operating their own swordfish harpoon, the *Pilika*, so its offerings are at peak freshness and flavor. Pro tip: Order the swordfish, then enjoy the sun setting over the tight-knit town, which has managed to hold onto its slice-of-life charm despite ballooning with tourists during the summer months.

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[redacted]: Edwin Goei, "The New Northgate Gonzalez Market in Anaheim Is Like a Mexican-Food Disneyland" in OC Weekly

Best Round-Up or Best Of

[redacted]: Edwin Goei, "Korean Fried Chicken Is Becoming a Thing in Orange County. Here Are Three New Spots" in OC Weekly

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[redacted]: R. Scott Moxley "Orange County's Informant Scandal Yields Evidence of Forensic Science Deception in Murder Trials" in OC Weekly

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THE PRAYER CHAIN • JUL 28 | PIXIES • AUG 10 | YURIDIA • AUG 13
US THE DUO • AUG 17 | RAMON AYALA • AUG 18 | SCANDAL • SEP 9 | E-40 • SEP 11
RESIDENTE • SEP 12 | C.A.R. • SEP 14 | JACK RUSSELL'S GREAT WHITE • SEP 15
AN EVENING WITH CHRIS ROBINSON BROTHERHOOD • SEP 20
IRON & WINE • SEP 28 | OWL CITY • OCT 2 | MAT KEARNEY • OCT 7
HEPCAT • OCT 19 | AMANDA MIGUEL & DIEGO VERDAGUER • OCT 21
TROYE SIVAN | OCT 27 | TRIVIUM • NOV 2 | METALACHI • NOV 10
THE SELECTER & THE ENGLISH BEAT FT. RANKING ROGER • NOV 13
THRICE • NOV 17 | ELVIS COSTELLO & THE IMPOSTERS • NOV 28

APPEARING ON THE PARISH STAGE: WEATHERS • JUN 21 | SMG4 • JUN 23
PARTICLE • JUL 1 | TWRP • JUL 10 | THE WLDLFE & CEMETERY SUN • JUL 13
THE LITTLE MERMEN • JUL 14 | HOBO JOHNSON & THE LOVEMAKERS • JUL 15
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AND MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

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OCWEEKLY

Best Of 2017

REVISITING THE BEER AWARDS

Best Beer Selection / Craft Beer Bar

Goat Hill Tavern | Editorial Pick

The American Dream | Readers' Choice Winner

Best Craft Beer Shop

Provisions Market | Editorial Pick

Hi Times Wine Cellar | Readers' Choice Winner

Best Local Beer

Asylum Brewing | Editorial Pick

Four Sons Brewing | Readers' Choice Winner

Best Local Brewery

Chapman Crafted | Editorial Pick

Barley Forge | Readers' Choice Winner

Best Local IPA

Left Coast Brewing: Nuclear Chi Chis
Editorial Pick

Barley Forge: The Orange Curtain IPA
Readers' Choice Winner

2018 winners will he announced & published in the *Best of 2018* issue on 10/18/18

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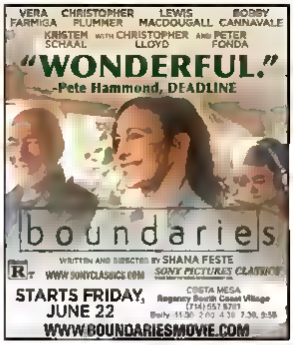

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fri/06/22

[ART]

THE ARTIST'S ARTIST

'Matisse Drawings: Curated by Ellsworth Kelly'

This exhibit at the Long Beach Museum of Art is really two happening together, with 45 drawings by Henri Matisse selected and presented by the revered American artist Ellsworth Kelly, who, although he never met Matisse, was dubbed the "artist I now think of as the American Matisse" in an obituary by *The New York Times*' famed art critic Jerry Saltz. So there's a natural harmony in this pairing, with Matisse's clear and vibrant work alongside nine complementary lithographs by the self-taught Kelly, who was particularly inspired after close study of Matisse's works on a trip to France in the mid-1960s. It's a welcome chance not only to see these lesser-known Matisse pieces in person, but also to see them as contextualized by another visionary artist.

"Matisse Drawings: Curated by Ellsworth Kelly" at the Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 439-2119, lbma.org. $8-$10, members, free. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

[CONCERT]

Oogum Boogum!

Brenton Wood

Faithfully donning a fedora, tie and suspenders, Brenton Wood has style and soul. Originally from Shreveport, Louisiana, the singer made a name for himself out west back in 1967. That's the year Wood released "The Oogum Boogum Song" and "Gimme Little Sign" off Double Shot Records. He followed up those chart-climbing feats with the less appreciated but still legendary ballad "Me and You" off his sophomore album. At 76, Wood still frequents the oldies circuit and shows no signs of slowing down. He performs for audiences young and old, all of whom sing along to his songs. But don't croon "Me and You" to impress your *hyna* unless you're able to hit those high notes. Let brother Brenton take it away!

Brenton Wood at Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, martysonnewport.com. 8 p.m., also Sat. $35. 21+. —GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

MORE ›› ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

sat/06/23

[COMMUNITY EVENTS]

RAINBOW CONNECTIONS

OC Pride

With the theme "Be You," this year's OC Pride event is a fiery rebel yell in these turbulent times if we've ever heard one. This celebration of all people within the LGBTQI spectrum includes a cavalcade of events brimming with fun, information and entertainment. The "Blaze Forward" Pride Parade takes place at 10:30 a.m. down East Fourth Street, while the festival itself offers multiple stages around downtown Santa Ana. Expect numerous DJs, musical groups including ManAlive, OC's main choral group of gay men, comedians, and drag queens. Plus, there will be a Mr., Miss, Ms. and Mx. Gay Pride Orange County crowned. The fun runs all weekend, so grab your brightest rainbow attire possible and have a ball!

OC Pride Festival at Yost Theater, 307 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana; parade starts at Fourth Street and Ross, Santa Ana, www.prideoc.com. 10:30 a.m. Parade: free, festival, $10-$60. —AIMEE MURILLO

[FILM]

A Woman's World

The Misandrists

Perhaps you think John Waters' or Richard Kern's films push societal buttons the most, but underground filmmaker Bruce La Bruce ups the ante with his political shock cinema. Boldly going where not many directors have gone before, La Bruce's most recent DIY cinema effort is a transgressive comedy focusing on a cult of man-hating lesbian feminists out to destroy the patriarchy by any means necessary. That is, until one member hides a man with whom she eventually falls in love—complicating this Sapphic commune's quest for female liberation. Whether you make it to OC Pride or not, find time in your schedule for this wildly out-there screening.

MORE ›› ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

The Misandrists at the Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Ste. 100, Santa Ana, (714) 285-9422, thefridacinema.org. 10 p.m. $7-$10. —AIMEE MURILLO

sun/06/24

[FESTIVALS]

Taste of the Bayou

Long Beach Bayou Festival

For more than three decades, the Long Beach Bayou Festival has been bringing Creole culture to little ol' SoCal. There's live Zydeco, blues and jazz music playing nonstop, with dance lessons peppered throughout the day. Among the fest's many highlights are the Mardi Gras parade, which snakes through the grounds on both days (that's the one for which folks get *really* dressed up, wear masks and pump parasols in the air), and the real draw, the food, which is alone worth the price of admission. There's a crawfish-eating contest and boils available for expert crawdad peelers, plus rows of booths hawking delicacies such as crawfish etouffee, frog legs, jambalaya, catfish, king cake and so much more. *Laissez les bons temps rouler!*

Long Beach Bayou Festival at the *Queen Mary*, 1126 Queens Hwy., Long Beach, (562) 912-4451, longbeachbayou.com. 11 a.m. $25-$35. —ERIN DEWITT

[SPORTS]

The Main Event

WWE Live Summerslam

Stars of the WWE are hitting the road and ready to rumble for the Summerslam Heatwave tour. Fans can witness each storyline of their favorite (or most hated) superstars playing out on the ropes, as suspense builds for which names will show up on the main card. On the roster for the Six Man Tag Team Match are Roman Reigns, Braun Strowman, Sami Zayn, Bobby Lashley, Jinder Mahal and Kevin Owens. Expect plenty of spectacle, surprises, action and spandex—and keep your eyes open for whatever unpredictable madness strikes next!

WWE Live Summerslam at Honda Center, 2695 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 704-2500, www.hondacenter.com. 7 p.m. $24-$119. —AIMEE MURILLO

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mon/06/25

[CONCERT]

A-Punks!

Vampire Weekend

Even though they haven't released any new music since 2013 and have performed live sparingly over the past four years, Vampire Weekend's time outside the public eye has been anything but uneventful. A flurry of activity awaits the Brooklyn-originating band, as they work on their fourth album, which is expected to be released sometime this year. Their two shows at the Observatory should provide the group the opportunity to showcase new material in front of a supportive audience, as well as give fans the chance to see the trio before they hit the festival circuit.

Vampire Weekend at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m., also Tues. $35. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

tue/06/26

[BURLESQUE]

Ooh La La!

Dita Von Teese

Young Heather Sweet launched out of quiet Irvine in the 1990s, taking on the world as her perfectly coifed and highly curated burlesque-dancing alter ego Dita Von Teese. In the decades since, she has been dubbed the "International Queen of Burlesque," Springboarding from the janky South County strip hole Captain Cream's to the swanky stage of Crazy Horse in gay Paris, Von Teese has taken the Swarovski crystal-embellished bull by the horns—and in custom-made Louboutin cowboy boots, no less. Any time Dita rolls back through town, be it in a 1931 Packard or '46 Super Deluxe, we're thrilled to give the University High alum a homecoming fit for an international queen!

Dita Von Teese and the Copper Coupe Burlesque Revue at House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim, (714) 778-2483, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim. 8 p.m. $40. —TAYLOR HAMBY

wed/06/27

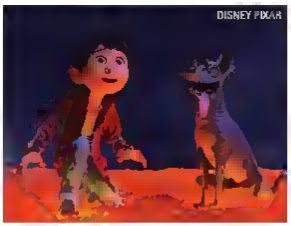
[CONCERT]

Get Your Kicks

Vista Kicks

Homegrown, booty-shakin', rock & roll band Vista Kicks are stopping at the Wayfarer as part of their current tour. The four-piece grew up together in Northern California, listening to classic rock, pop and disco and performing at local parties. Last year, the band, who've been rocking the LA music scene for several years, produced and released their first full-length album, *Booty Shakers Ball*. Pop on over to their website and give their catchy tunes a listen, then come shake your booty at tonight's ball.

Vista Kicks at the Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, wayfarercm.com. 8 p.m. $15-$18. 21+. —SCOTT FEINBLATT



[FILM]

Un Poco Loco

Coco

Sure, anyone can stream *Coco* on Netflix these days. But summer is here, and nothing beats lying on a blanket and enjoying a movie in a park. Thankfully, the Academy Award winner for Best Animated Film is coming to Costa Mesa's Tewinkle Park. Enjoy the *Día de los Muertos* capers of Miguel as he traverses the Land of the Dead in search of his musical lineage. The cinematic love letter to Mexico, its people and their traditions is just as beautiful the second time around. Oh, and when those notes for "Remember Me" are plucked on guitar, tell friends and family, "I'm not crying. You're crying!"

Coco at Tewkinkle Park, 970 Arlington Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 754-5300, www.facebook.com/fit4mom.costamesa. 5:45 p.m. Free. —GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

thu/06/28

[ART]

Popped Up Presses

Papercut Lounge

For innovation in design and text, photography and color on the page, Papercut invites you to pop in to a pop-up show by the bibliophilic booster outfit that calls its print-culture roadshow a "showcase of the most influential publishing companies in the world." All variety of zines, slick journals, and big and small books are displayed at the bespoke Papercut Lounge installation at Art Exchange's cutting-edge creative space. It's one more provocative pro-arts event in the city of Long Beach's annual, monthlong POW! WOW! celebration, which cleverly, vividly, joyfully brings art and culture to public spaces, from street art events to more of its now-familiar murals, which have done to walls what these folks do to paper.

Papercut Lounge at Art Exchange, 356 E. Third St., Long Beach, (562) 999-2267, artexchangelongbeach.org. 2 p.m. Through June 30. Free. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

[LGBT EVENTS]

Party for Pride!

Giovanni's Room Dance Party Fundraiser

The LGBT Center OC invites you to its second Giovanni's Room Dance Party Fundraiser, a queer- and trans-inclusive event that rounds out Pride month! Slip into your sassiest sequins or suspenders and shake your bodacious bits to the stylings of DJ Flower and DJ Good Karl, who'll be spinning the very best of electronic, house, underground hip-hop, disco and electroclash. The soiree is open to any LGBTQI 18 or older, so the drinks are non-alcoholic, but you know very well that no one needs a spiked punch to sashay and shanté across the dance floor, *gurl*. All funds raised go toward the Center's youth programs. Come on out, make a splash, and send some cash to kids in need of a little support and guidance.

Giovanni's Room Dance Party Fundraiser at the LGBT Center on 4th, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 953-5428, www.lgbtcenteroc.org. 4 p.m. $5 suggested donation. 18+. —SR DAVIES

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7/10 ERIC JOHNSON
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7/22 THE FIXX
7/29 PATTY SMYTH & SCANDAL

8/9 BUDDY GUY

7/7 YOUNG DUBLINERS

8/10 GEOFF TATE'S OPERATION MINDCRIME

7/10 ERIC JOHNSON

8/3 VENICE
8/4 ABBAFAB (ABBA TRIBUTE)
8/5 RONNIE SPECTOR & THE RONETTES
8/9 BUDDY GUY
8/10 GEOFF TATE'S: 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF OPERATION: MINDCRIME
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9/25 NONK
8/27 AMANDA SHIRES
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8/24 THE ALARM

7/13 COCO MONTOYA

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Mando Cordove 7pm-Close DBN Lounge
FRIDAY 6/22
Juke Joint Preachers 8:30pm-9:30pm &
Guitar Shorty 9:30pm-Close Shebeen Bar
*Ticketed Event
DJ Audissey 9pm-Close DBN Lounge
SATURDAY 6/23
World Tour-Legends 7:30-9:00pm-Close
*Ticketed Event
Jack Tempchin 7:30-9:00pm
DBN Lounge *Ticketed Event
DJ BB Guns 9pm-Close DBN Lounge
SUNDAY 6/24
Jazz Brunch w/ Mando & G Force 1pm-3pm
Shebeen Bar
Einstein Brown 5pm-7:30pm Shebeen Bar
Errol Bonnick 7:30pm-Close Shebeen Bar
Jack Tempchin 7:30-9:00pm
DBN Lounge *Ticketed Event
WEDNESDAY 6/27
Brothers Igniting a Groove
8pm-Close Shebeen Bar
THURSDAY 6/28
Andrew Bloom 8pm-Close Shebeen Bar
Mando Cordova 7pm-Close DBN Lounge
FRIDAY 6/29
Party Foul 9pm-Close Shebeen Bar
DJ Blunk 9pm-Close DBN Lounge
SATURDAY 6/30
Room at The Top 9PM-Close Shebeen Bar
DJ BB Guns 9pm-Close DBN Lounge
SUNDAY 7/1
Jazz Brunch w/Maureen O'Sullivan
1pm- 3pm Shebeen Bar
Einstein Brown 5pm-7:30pm Shebeen Bar
Upstream 7:30pm-Close Shebeen Bar
Francois Dean 6pm-Close DBN Lounge
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Friday

RRENTON WOOD 9 p.m., $35, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin. (714) 544-1995. www.martysonnewport.com.

THE GDSPEL SWAMP, LANTARIANS, POLLY ESTHER, TOKYO LUCRY HOLE 8 p.m., $5. 21+. The Wayfarer. 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarerem.com

LONG BEACH DUB ALL-STARS, FAYUCA, CALIFA. 8 p.m., $5. 21+. The Observatory. 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

MIKE ELDRED TRIO 8 p.m., free. all ages. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchen. 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-7469. www.slidebarfullerton.com

Saturday

RATMORILE, GORILLA, THE TEST PILOTS, STELLAR CORPSES, THE RLAX, THE ROCKETZ, THE GRAVE SLAVES, THE AUTOPSIES, GALACTIC POLECATS 5 p.m., $30, 21+. The Observatory. 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com

RRENTON WOOD. 9 p.m. $35. 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin. (714) 544-1995. www.martysonnewport.com.

THE DICKIES. 7 p.m., $15, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583. www.hoseofblues.com/anaheim

JAPANESE BREAKFAST, FLORIST, SASAMI ASHWORTH. 8 p.m., $16-$18, all ages. The Glass House. 200 W. Second St., Pomona. (909) 865-3802. www.theglasshouse.es.

VNSSA, WET HAND DAN, TANG. 9 p.m., $7. 21+. The Wayfarer. 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarerem.com

Sunday

CHON, PDLYPHIA, TTNG, TRICOT. 6 p.m., $20. all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Disney Way. Anaheim. (714) 778-2583. www.hoseofblees.com/anaheim

FARRURD, LARY OVER. 8 p.m., $45, 21+. The Observatory. 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com

LA RANDA SKALAVERA, RED STORE RUMS 9 p.m., $10. 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Tustin. (714) 544-1995. www.martysonnewport.com

NINJA BRIAN. 8 p.m., $12, all ages. The Glass House. 200 W. Second St., Pomona. (909) 865-3802. www.theglasshouse.us

SIXES, WITCH CASKET, SICARIUS, SLEEPING SEA KING. 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N-Roll Kitchee. 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-7469. www.slidebarfullerton.com.

XIN XIN, PRVLGS, GINGER ROOT. 5 p.m., free, 21+. The Wayfarer. 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarerem.com.

Monday

BLANCO NINO, NO SMALL CHILDREN, PDLLY ESTHER. 8 p.m., free. 21+. The Wayfarer. 843 W. 19th St. Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarerem.com

RATCHAFIRE. 9 p.m. $30, 21+. Marty's On Newport, 14401 Newport Ave., Testin, (714) 544-1995. www.martysonnewport.com

VAMPIRE WEEKEND. 8 p.m., $35. 21+. The Observatory. 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

Tuesday

CALMGROVE. 8 p.m. free. 21+. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-7469. www.slidebarfullerton.com

DITA VONTEESE. 7:30 p.m. $40. 21+. House of Blees at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Orsney Way. Anaheim. (714) 778-2583. www.houseofblues.com/anaheim

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FREDOIE GIRRS. 8 p.m. $20. 21+. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com.

VISTA KICRS. 8 p.m., $15-$18. 21+. The Wayfarer. 843 W. 19th St. Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarerem.com

Thursday, June 28

CHUCR RAGAN. 8 p.m., $16-$18. 21+. The Waylarer. 843 W. 19th St. Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039. www.wayfarerem.com

REGRETTER, MT. EDDY, DESTROY ROYS. 7:30 p.m., $12. 21+. The Constellation Room. 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600. www.observatoryoc.com

THE SUPERVILLAINS. 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchee. 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-7469. www.slidebarfullerton.com.

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Blown Away

I m a 24-year-old straight guy who recently broke up with my girlfriend of more than four years. One of the reasons we broke up was a general lack of sexual compatibility. She had a particular aversion to anal sex—both giving and receiving. I didn't get a blowjob the whole time we were together. Which brings me to why I am writing: One of my closest friends, "Sam," is a gay guy. Shortly after breaking up with my girlfriend, I was discussing my lack of oral sex with Sam, and he said he'd be willing to "help me out." I agreed, and Sam gave me an earth-shattering blowjob. I was glad to get some and had no hang-ups about a guy sucking me. Since then, Sam has blown me three more times. My problem is I am starting to feel guilty and worry I am using Sam. He's a very good buddy, and I'm concerned this lopsided sexual arrangement might be bad for our friendship. Sam knows I am not into guys and I'm never going to reciprocate, and I feel like this is probably not really fair to him. But these are literally the only blowjobs I've received since I was a teenager. What should I do?

Totally Have Reservations Over Advantage Taking

Only one person knows how Sam feels about this "lopsided sexual arrangement," THROAT, and it isn't me—it's Sam.

Zooming out for a second: People constantly ask me how the person they're fucking or fisting or flogging feels about all the fucking or fisting or flogging they're doing. Guys ask me why a woman ghosted them, and women ask me if their boyfriend is secretly gay. And while I'm perfectly happy to speculate, I'm not a mind reader. Which means I have no way of knowing for sure why this woman ghosted you or if your boyfriend is gay—or in your case, THROAT, how Sam feels about the four nonreciprocal blowjobs he's given you.

Only Sam knows.

And that's why I wrote you back, THROAT, and asked you for Sam's contact information. Since you were clearly too afraid to ask Sam yourself (most likely for fear the blowjobs would stop), I offered to ask Sam on your behalf. I wasn't serious—it was my way of saying, "You should really ask Sam." But you sent me Sam's contact info, and a few minutes later, I was chatting with Sam.

"Yes, I have been sucking my straight friend's cock," Sam said to me. "And I am flattered he told you I was good at it. That's an ego booster!"

Sam, like THROAT, is 24 years old. He grew up on the East Coast and met THROAT early in his first year at college. Sam came out at the end of his freshman year to THROAT and his other friends, and he now lives in a big city where he works in marketing when he isn't sucking off THROAT.

My first question for Sam: Is he one of those gay guys who get off on "servicing" straight guys?

"I've never done anything with a straight guy before this," said Sam. "So, no, I'm not someone who is 'into servicing straight guys.' I have only ever dated and hooked up with gay guys before!"

So why offer to blow THROAT?

"I didn't know until after he broke up with his girlfriend that he hadn't gotten a blowjob the whole time they were together—four years!" Sam said. "When I told him I'd be happy to help him out, I was joking. I swear I wasn't making a pass at my straight friend! But there was this long pause, and then he got serious and said he'd be into it. I wondered for a minute if it would be weird for me to blow my friend, and there was definitely a bit of convincing each other that we were serious. When he started taking his clothes off, I thought, 'So this is going to happen.' It was not awkward after. We even started joking about it right away. I have sucked him off four more times since then."

SavageLove

» DAN SAVAGE

For those of you keeping score at home: Either THROAT lost count of the number of times Sam has blown him—THROAT said Sam has blown him three more times after that first blowjob—or THROAT got a fifth blowjob in the short amount of time that elapsed between sending me his letter and putting me in touch with Sam.

So does this lopsided sexual arrangement—blowing a straight boy who's never going to blow him—bother Sam?

"I suppose it is a 'lopsided sexual arrangement,'" said Sam. "But I don't mind. I really like sucking dick, and I'm really enjoying sucking his dick. He has a really nice dick! And from my perspective, we're both having fun. And, yes, I've jacked off thinking about it after each time I sucked him. I know—now—that he thinks it is a bit unfair to me. But I don't feel that way at all."

So there is something in it for Sam. You get the blowjobs, THROAT and Sam gets the spank-bankable memories. And Sam assumes that at some point, memories are all he'll have.

"He will eventually get into a relationship with a woman again, and our arrangement will end," said Sam. "I only hope nothing is weird between us in the future because of what has happened in the past few weeks."

I had one last question: Sam is really good at sucking cock—he gives "earth-shattering" blowjobs—but is THROAT any good at getting his cock sucked? As all experienced cocksuckers know, a person can suck at getting their cock sucked. They can just lay/stand/sit there, giving you no feedback, or be too pushy or not pushy enough...etc.

"That's a really good question," Sam said. "I have to say, he is very good at it. He really gets into it, he moans, he talks about how good it feels, and he lasts a long time. That's part of what makes sucking his cock so much fun."

I'm a straight guy in a LTR with a bi woman. We recently had a threesome with a bi male acquaintance. We made it clear that I'm not into guys and that she was going to be the center of attention. He said he was fine with this. A little bit into us hooking up, he said he wanted to suck my dick. I wasn't sure about it at first, but my girlfriend encouraged it because she thought it was a hot. I ended up saying yes, but I stated that I didn't want to reciprocate. A bit later, while my girlfriend was sucking his dick, he said he wanted me to join her. I said no, he kept badgering me to do it, I kept saying no, and then he physically tried to shove my head toward his crotch. My girlfriend and I both got pissed and said he had to leave. Now he's bitching to our mutual friends about how I had an insecure straight-boy freak-out, he didn't get to come after we both got ours, we're shitty selfish fetishists, and so on. I'm concerned about what our friends think of me, but even more so, I'm concerned that I did a shitty thing. I get that maybe he was hoping I'd change my mind, especially after I changed my mind about him sucking my dick. But I don't think it's fair for him to be angry that I didn't, is oral reciprocation so necessary that it doesn't matter that we agreed in advance that I would not be blowing him?

Not One To Be Inconsiderate

You did nothing wrong. And if after hearing your side of the story, NOTBI, your mutual friends side with a person who pressured you to do something you were clear about *not* wanting to do, and then, after you restated your opposition to performing said act, pressured you to perform the act—by physically forcing your head down to his cock—you can solve the "mutual friends" problem by cutting these so-called friends out of your life.

On the Lovecast (savagelovecast.com), what makes a kinkster a kinkster? Contact Dan with an email at mail@savagelove.net, follow him on Twitter @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org.

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» MARY CARREON

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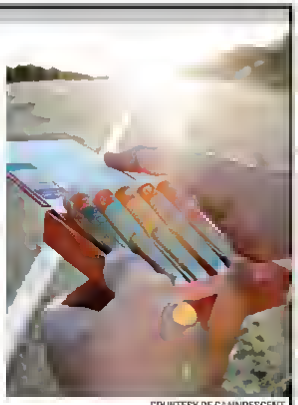

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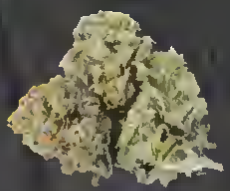

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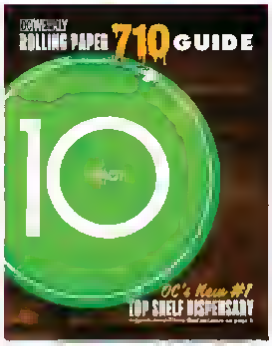

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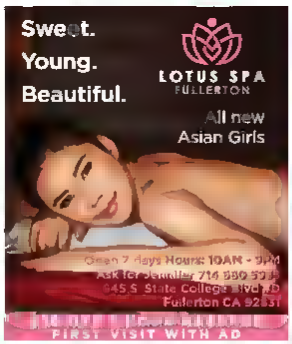

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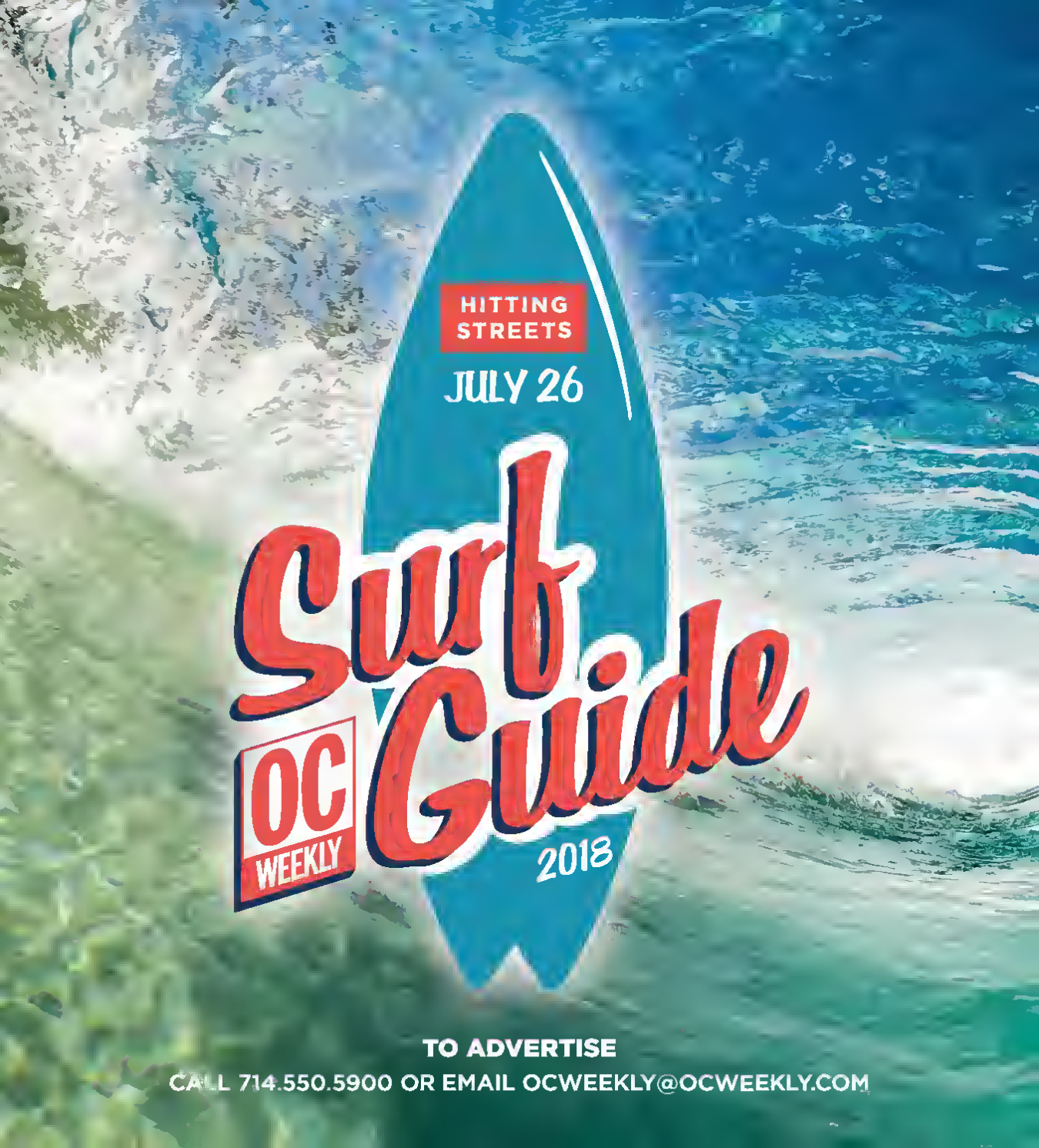

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ISLAND OF FIRE

PHOTOS BY JOEL BEERS

WHEN BETTER TO VISIT THE BIG ISLAND THAN DURING A VOLCANIC EXPLOSION?

BY JOEL BEERS

His best friend had died four months ago. A brief, but intense and intensive love affair had just immolated. Like any self-respecting egocentric and scarred Leo, all he wanted was to slink away and lick his wounds.

So why not head toward an erupting volcano?

The trip to the big island of Hawaii was a parting gift from the aforementioned friend, Sandy Kates, the owner of the Back Alley Bar and Grill in Fullerton, where he had worked part-time for 12 years. Battling cancer for more than a year, Sandy had repeatedly urged him, "There are frequent-flier miles on the company credit card. I don't think they can be used after I die. Use them."

And he did, booking a flight to Hawaii after learning Sandy had two weeks to live. That was January. The trip was late May. And though in his miserable state of mind, flying over 2,500 miles of ocean sounded awful, it was still better than Fullerton.

It was his last of the 50 states. But he yearned to travel solo to a state—hell, a part of the world—where no one knew him. Just because. He chose the Big Island (with a one-day $190 flight to Oahu) to see a volcano. But since Kilauea, which has been erupting since 1983, turned aggressive in early May, nearing its summit wasn't workable. So he hunkered in Kailua-Kona, about 90 miles west. The bars, shops, excursions and such were open, but locals said the visibility was the worst in at least 30 years. But he had nothing to compare it to, so he moved on with no planned agenda, no car, no place to stay. (Airbnb, Lyft and Turo made all that dumb stuff easy enough.)

He had one important thing to do: scatter the four small vials of Sandy's ashes that his daughter-in-law, Jenn Kates, had given him.

The first was Kahalu'u Beach Park, about 5 miles south of downtown Kona, his first snorkeling spot, where he uttered a hasty, silent benediction and dumped the ashes into the life-pulsating sea. The second was further south, across the small bay from Pu'uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park, a sacred place for native Hawaiians, where anyone who had broken an ancient Kapu law could be spared death by a priest's forgiveness—as long as they could traverse a treacherous land or ocean passage and scale a 10-foot wall while eluding potential captors. The third was Pearl Harbor, the one place he'd told Sandy he'd wind up. The last was South Point, the southernmost part of the United States. It was his last piece of Sandy—and the most emotional of the four. (Note to the wise snorkeling guy: Don't snorkel when you're shedding tears. You won't stay down long.)

Scattering Sandy's ashes in a place neither of them had been before was heavy. As prosaic as it sounds, every time he tipped those vials into the sea, he felt connected with the person he missed the most, saying hello and goodbye and, weirdly, hello again. He could have done that anywhere. But he's glad he chose Hawaii. Yes, selfishly, all he'd done, in AA speak, was pull a geographic, distancing himself from the noises he felt were drowning him, but the biggest noise of all—himself—was still between his ears. Yet he discovered something more about that island. Or, better put, the water surrounding it. There are no clocks, text messages, doctor's appointments, expectations or disappointments in those waters. Just the life and rhythm of the sea. Serene, colorful, enchanting. Yet, there is a sense of finality. John Cale said it years ago: In the end, the ocean will have us all.

Of course, the ocean isn't the only thing that makes Hawaii Hawaii. There are also earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and the laidback people, slower vibe and stunning landscapes. It's a place of natural splendor and beauty that can, occasionally, turn terrifying, constantly being reborn and renewed through sporadic fits of destruction. Most people visit there to recreate, but it is also a living and unruly temple to consecrate a friend and to take halting steps toward dealing with a loss, whether it's the unyielding memory of someone you loved or the piercing reality of someone you've just lost. And, maybe, living in an uneasy state of harmony—or at least awareness—with what is so unpredictable can make us more humbled or appreciative of what truly matters.

As Carl the Lyft driver, who drove him to the airport on his last day, said, in response to the question he asked everyone he met who lived there, "What do you most like about the island?"

"The volcano, man. I mean, it puts it all into perspective, you know? Kind of makes you realize that property and all the hassles we put ourselves through really aren't that important."

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